Inspire

Residential Addendum

ACSI
STRONGER TOGETHER

Residential Addendum for ACSI *Inspire*

General Instructions

This addendum is designed to supplement the *Inspire* protocol, providing information specific to residential programs. This addendum will identify:

- *Modifications* to *Inspire* indicators that are required for all residential programs
- *Additional Indicators* to be addressed that are not found in *Inspire* and are unique to residential programs
- *Evidence* that is specific to the residential program (beyond that which is indicated by the Evidence Guide)

How does a school know if they need to use this addendum for residential programs?

If a school has more than 4 students, or more than 4% of the student population of the division(s) in which the school has residential students (if either is true), staying in housing other than that of a biological family member, they will be required to use this addendum. (For example, schools with international student programs who house their students in dorms or homestays would use this for the residential aspects of their programs.) Even if a school is below the minimum number of students to be required to utilize this addendum, if the following are true, then it would be best if the school uses the addendum.

  - Students are placed by agencies or the school itself (not just by friends of a family)
  - Even if numbers are small and may fluctuate, there are always students in boarding or homestays every year.

Schools who utilize a boarding or homestay program with students will be required to use this addendum beginning with visits during the 2025-2026 academic year. If you, the school, are still unsure, contact your **accreditation director** to help you decide.

Introduction

Parents who consider sending their children to a residential or homestay program deserve every possible assurance concerning the quality of the boarding care it will provide. Likewise, the residential program governing body needs to be able to assure constituents that the governing body and boarding staff are good stewards of the young lives entrusted to them, and that the residential program delivers a safe, high-quality level of care. Accreditation by a well-recognized agency provides a seal of quality assurance upon a residential program that gives constituents confidence.

This accreditation protocol is intended only for school programs which are currently accredited or going through the school accreditation process simultaneously through *Inspire*. Unless given an exception, this residential program protocol is to be completed at the same time as a school accreditation self-study and visit. The indicators and evidence required by this addendum will help a school extend the same level of attention they give to their school program to the residential aspects under the school's authority. The residential program's self-study report, including the improvement plan, should reflect this holistic approach. The report must reflect clear alignment among the areas addressed in each domain, its summary findings, and its plan for improvement.

A residential program may have a dormitory model, a homestay model, or some of each. This residential program addendum applies to all variations. There will be a few indicators that may need to be interpreted differently when evaluating a dormitory as opposed to a single home. At the end of several indicators, additional information will explain those differences. Another difference is whether the school or an outside entity manages the homestay or dorm situation. Either way, schools have the ultimate responsibility for students in boarding related to their school. The school must know about and be able to

answer for the care of students in a residential program attached to their school. They may monitor and interview students while they are on campus or in some other way oversee the homestay situations. Ratings for all indicators are required by the school even if outside agencies provide some of the direct services to students. A school cannot opt out of this responsibility by subcontracting the management of its boarding program to individuals, companies, or ministries. They need to assert enough oversight of the program to answer the questions contained in this document.

For any additional questions, contact your accreditation director or accreditation@acsi.org.

Self-Study

If it is determined that the school needs to complete the Residential Addendum, the school will create a residential subcommittee that should include residential and other interested staff that can evaluate the boarding program.

Additional sections will be made active in the digital platform. *Additional* and *modified* indicators will be included along with a text box for each domain. There will also be an area for additional evidence for the residential program for each indicator listed.

Each domain will have a textbox similar to those for the main *Inspire* protocol, allowing those who work on the Residential Addendum to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Included in this textbox should be a general reflection that helps explain any distinctives, challenges, or context for the visiting team member(s) reviewing the residential portion of the report. Those who are working on the Residential Addendum will identify prioritized goals resulting specifically from the Residential Addendum and share those with the steering committee.

The Residential subcommittee will rate and provide evidence for the indicators that are *additional* and *modified*. For the indicators where only additional evidence is required, the Residential subcommittee should look at the rating that the school's subcommittee gave that indicator. If they see a significant difference in the residential program once they look at the residential evidence, they should note that in the textbox provided.

A few general questions will be asked at the beginning of the Residential Addendum section in the digital platform. This information is needed to provide context for the team member(s). More information will be provided with the prompts in the digital platform:

1) Provide **demographics and personnel** (a table will be provided):
    a. student numbers
    b. gender
    c. grades by residential unit/floor of the students in the residential program
    d. personnel assigned to each unit/floor
    e. additional descriptive information if it would be helpful
2) Describe the **history and administration** of the program, including how the residential program came into existence, the leadership and reporting structure, and how it operates in relation to the school program.
3) Describe the **physical plant**, such as buildings and grounds and unique features that describe it.
4) Provide **trends** from the past three years.
5) Provide **plans** for the next three years.

Evidence

The residential subcommittee will need to provide evidence that pertains specifically to the residential program for all indicators that are *additional*, *modified*, or marked for additional evidence. The visiting team member for the residential program will review the evidence to determine if the program is

effectively meeting each indicator. If an *Inspire* indicator is not listed, no evidence needs to be provided that is specific to the residential program.

Readiness Checklist for the Residential Program

Approximately eight weeks prior to the team visit, the chair and at least one team member responsible for the residential program will perform a *Readiness Check* to determine if the visit can go forward. That check may be virtual or in-person. In most cases, the team member(s) is looking for a basic level of compliance or effectiveness on these components. Especially if it is a first visit, the residential program will not be expected to have the level of maturity of an established program.

All of the following must be in place at least at a basic level for the visit to go forward:

1. Well-documented residential program philosophy statements (philosophy of boarding/homestay, philosophy of discipline) support the broader Christian mission of the school. (Indicator 1.2)
2. All residential personnel have been selected with the help of an appropriate screening process and background check. (Standard 11 Checklist and Indicator 12.2)
3. All personnel involved in residential caregiving are supervised by qualified staff. (Indicator 12.3)staff. (Indicator 12.3)
4. A comprehensive written security and crisis management plan that includes the **residential** program and its facilities are in use. (Indicator 16.2)
5. Each residential facility/home has safety features that meet legal standards. (Indicator 16.2)
6. Child safety policies and procedures that include the residential program are in place. (Indicator 18.3)

The visit readiness check will be completed along with a Standard 11 Checklist. (Standard 11 Checklist items do not require many modifications for residential programs. However, the school's residential subcommittee should obtain appropriate documents and be prepared to submit any that pertain to their program.) The visit readiness check for residential programs will include the six items listed above. However, if the visit moves forward and it is discovered during the visit that the school is not effectively fulfilling all of the above requirements, the accreditation status for the residential program may be negatively impacted.

Composition of the Team

The chair of the combined visit will be appointed approximately 12-18 months prior to the team visit. That person will be an expert on the *Inspire* standards and indicators. An additional team member (or members, depending on size and nature of the program) will be appointed to serve on the team with experience in boarding. That person may make an on-site visit to the residential program within a year of the visit to assess the overall readiness of the program for the visit. He or she will also serve as the contact or resource person for the residential staff as they prepare the self-study in preparation for the team visit.

Team Visit

A combined team for the school and residential program will visit the school together. The visit includes observations of the facilities and programs, and interviews with students, parents, caregiving staff, administration, board members, and support staff. The purpose of these visits is to get a sense of the residential program and how it functions. The various groups that compiled the sections of the self-study will have meetings with visiting team members assigned to each of the domains. Observations in the residential homes/units will take place to view the program in action, staff-student relationships, food preparation, care of students, and facility quality. The tone of the interviews and residential home visit is collegial and not inspective. Some interviews will be scheduled, and others will be unplanned.

Team member(s) will rate the *additional* and *modified* indicators, evaluate the additional evidence, and contribute to the team report during the visit. The residential team member(s) will complete a reflection for each domain in which they will comment on their observations and additional evidence. A school may receive commendations or recommendations that pertain specifically to the residential program.

Icons used throughout this Addendum:

Modifications in the Residential Addendum, replacing an indicator in *Inspire*

Additional Indicators required for Residential Programs

Evidence needed that is specific to Residential Programs

Information for Homestay Families is in *Italics* at the end of selected indicators and preceded with "HF."

This Residential Addendum is intended to be used as a side-by-side document with Inspire.

PURPOSE DOMAIN

Additional Evidence

Indicator 1.1: Evidence of the mission being lived out in students' lives in dorms or homestays may be seen in written form in handbooks or similar documentation, which is accessible to students and families, but also should be demonstrated in words and deeds through daily life together.

Indicator 1.2: The school's mission is evident throughout the residential program and its operations and is promoted by the leadership. The residential program philosophy statements (philosophy of boarding/homestay, philosophy of discipline, partnering with parents) support the broader Christian mission of the school.

Indicator 1.3: The residential program clearly communicates admissions criteria and program expectations to constituents to ensure alignment with school mission, policies, and practices.

Indicator 1.4: Expected student outcomes for the residential program will be evident, assessed, and used to drive decisions specific to the residential program.

Indicator 2.2: Evidence of mentoring, discipleship, and spiritual formation is needed specific to the residential program.

Indicator 3.1: Evidence is needed that the governance body is clearly committed to the residential program and sees it as an extension of the school's mission.

Indicator 3.2: Evidence is needed to show that written policies of the governing body relate to the residential program and that strategic planning specifically includes the residential program.

Indicator 3.3: Operational practices will show evidence of appropriate coordination of roles and communication between the head of school and personnel responsible for the residential program (finance, safety, record keeping).

Modified Indicator

Modification for Indicator 3.5: The leader of the residential program oversees the day-to-day operations of the program and works collaboratively with the school leadership to develop, implement, and communicate policies and procedures; support programs and practices of effective residence life; and drive program improvement.

Additional Indicators

RES Indicator 3.7 The school has clearly defined policies, standards, and procedures for how the residential program relates to the rest of the school.

RES Indicator 3.8 The school establishes an administrative and supervisory structure including a program leader or homestay supervisor position appropriate for the size of the residential program.

RELATIONSHIPS DOMAIN

Additional Evidence

Indicator 5.1: Examples provided for evidence should include two-way communication and collaboration specifically between staff in the residential program and parents of residential students, as appropriate.

Indicator 5.2: Examples provided for evidence should include surveys and demographic data specifically from parents and students in the residential program.

EXPERTISE DOMAIN

Additional Evidence

Indicator 12.2: Provide evidence of the school's selection process to demonstrate that caregivers are qualified and prepared to work effectively in the residential environment. See glossary on Qualified Boarding Staff. (This would include orientation specific to nurturing and mentoring children/youth in a residential environment.)
HF - If students are placed in homes not selected by the school, see Indicator 20.5.

Indicator 12.4: Evidence will demonstrate that the residential program provides evaluation, training, and professional development appropriate for the unique roles of their personnel.
HF - Homestay parents must receive regular evaluation and training, whether they are managed by the school or outside agency.

RESOURCES DOMAIN

Modified Indicators

Modification for Indicator 14.2: The residential program is equitably resourced, appropriate to its needs. The budget is carefully constructed with appropriate input and prioritizes the funding of residential outcomes.
HF - Budgeting for homestay programs may not include a facility but may include supervisory staff, training, and program and activity expenses.

Modification for Indicator 16.1: The residential program provides a safe, secure, and well-maintained environment that is organized and developmentally appropriate for the students it serves. Each residential facility provides students with suitable levels of personal privacy in the bedroom and bathroom areas and safety as it relates to egresses and personal possessions.
HF - In homestays, this is typically one to two students in a home. If more than two students are placed in a

home (non-family) then adequate space/privacy must exist for each, along with appropriate supervision, and parental approval. Weapons or prescription drugs must be secured.

Modification for Indicator 16.2: Each vehicle has safety features for its context that meet legal standards appropriate for the children/youth involved and staff are trained in their use.
HF - In homestays, vehicles must be safe, well-maintained, and insured.

WELL-BEING DOMAIN

Additional Evidence

Indicator 18.1: The safety plan and its training and implementation specifically includes the residential program and are routinely monitored, maintained, and documented. Each residential home and boarding facility has safety features for its context that meet legal standards appropriate for the children/youth involved and staff are trained in their use.
HF - In homestays, security and emergency plans must include clear emergency exits, procedures, adequate fire protection, and appropriate security for a home with minor students.

Indicator 18.3: Child safety policies and procedures must specifically include the residential program and are regularly reviewed. These should include technology use and supervision.

Indicator 20.1: Evidence of the residential program caring for a student's well-being must include an identified system of care that effectively coordinates roles and responsibilities of all those involved with a struggling student, including parents. This should include outside referrals when appropriate.

Modified Indicator

Modification for Indicator 19.4: The work-life balance for personnel in the residential program should include regularly scheduled release time to maintain an adequate level of emotional, physical, and spiritual vitality while caring for boarding students.

Additional Indicators

RES Indicator 18.4 – Written policies and procedures for health services within the residential program have been developed, reviewed, and implemented. (These include guidelines for the safe storage and dispensing of medications in the residential home, as well as detailed record keeping of all health services rendered to residential students.)

RES Indicator 18.5 – The residential program has access to 24-hour medical care either through the provision of a full-time staff person qualified in preventive and emergency health care (school nurse) or by local medical clinics and/or hospitals. Policies must include record keeping and procedures for notifying parents.
HF - Policies regarding health services and medical care will vary depending on medical insurance purchased by students. The school will need to provide availability to these services through the host families or directly to students.

RES Indicator 18.6 – Required local, state, provincial, and national legal standards for sanitation and food services are met. Where such standards do not exist (non-western countries and individual homes), the residential program has adopted a recognized external standard. (i.e. Federal Nutrition Standards with Project Bread or the Dept of Education UK)
HF - Food must be prepared according to generally accepted standards expected in a home.

RES Indicator 19.5: Each residential home/unit is led by one or more qualified, live-in caregivers. Supervisory coverage is both adequate and consistent, and caregiving coverage is sufficient to meet the personal needs of students (academic, social, emotional, spiritual, physical, etc.).
HF - The need for a homestay supervisor position, and the amount of time dedicated to this

position would depend on the number of homestays. If more than two students are placed in a homestay situation, the supervisor would need to assess the adult-to-child ratio needed to supervise the additional students. The goal is for students to be well cared for in general supervision and caregiving relationships. (See Appendix A.)

RES Indicator 20.4 – The residential program has established a clearly defined advocacy system staffed by an individual or individuals who are independent of the school and residential program structure. (See *Appendix B*)

Homestay Families Only RES Indicator 20.5 – If students are placed in homes not selected by the school, the school must ensure that the host families have received orientation, and they must have a system to monitor and support students in those homes (Christian or non-Christian). Students must be required to adhere to the school and boarding handbooks regardless of the home in which they live.

Glossary of Residential Terms used throughout the Addendum

Advocacy system – procedures that help a student receive the attention, assistance, or resources they need. An advocacy system involves contacting an independent person who is not in the organizational structure of the residential or school program and can therefore act without fear of reprisal to their own position, for speaking up. Students may need help to speak up when they need an advocate or if the student feels a report of harm has not been properly attended to.

Background check: a background check is usually administered by a government agency for a nominal fee. The background check typically includes past employment verification, credit history, and criminal record. The checks are performed to determine if a job applicant has anything in his or her past that would preclude the applicant from filling a position of trust such as a teacher, boarding home parent, or residence assistant. When a candidate for boarding service is considered from a country that is unable to provide an adequate background check the school will need to add in additional reference checks from various local sources – pastor, and employer recommendation. These additional steps cannot be skipped.

Boarding - may be used interchangeably for residential program, describing children or youth living away from their parents; or may refer to a dormitory style of living.

Caregivers – staff who regularly look after children/youth in the residential program.

Caregiving Coverage - provides focused relational caregiving directed toward the well-being of each boarding student in the boarding home/unit. This specialized caregiving will include the emotional, physical, academic, spiritual, and or social needs of each student and may be met via a team of trained individuals from the school community, or by a primary caregiver in the boarding program in consultation with others.

Dormitory – a living facility where students have individual or shared rooms in a single building.

Duty of Care – "A requirement that a person act toward others and the public with the watchfulness, attention, caution, and prudence that a reasonable person in the circumstances would use. If a person's actions do not meet this standard of care, then the acts are considered negligent, and any damages resulting may be claimed in a lawsuit for negligence." Provided at law.com's legal dictionary.

Expected student outcomes for boarding - what the residential program intentionally targets for all boarding students to know, believe, understand, prefer, and be able to do after their tenure in the boarding program. Outcomes are based on the philosophy of the program as well as its statements of mission and vision and are then personalized to the lives of the students.

Handbook – a handbook is considered a collection of current information about the school's residential program. This information will be detailed enough for parents of boarding students and the students themselves, current and prospective, to obtain an accurate picture of life and expectations in the residential program. Such material may be in printed form, or available electronically via the school's website or its community portal.

Homestay – when students stay in the home of an approved family (not usually used when family friends or relatives make housing arrangements)

Parents - usually refers to the biological parents of a student but it may be adoptive, grandparents, or otherwise legal guardians.

Personal privacy – describing a situation where a student has access to time alone in a bathroom and adequate time in a shower area, both with private stalls. May also indicate that students have a private area in their bedroom to keep personal possessions or to just be alone for a period of time occasionally.

Philosophy of Boarding – the written document that articulates the boarding program's beliefs about how children learn, grow, and flourish during their years in boarding. The statement determines the methods and practices deemed appropriate considering the program's view of the nature and needs of

children. It also reflects on its view of guiding children in their care and the relationship to the parents of those boarding children.

Philosophy of discipline - the written document that articulates the program's beliefs about how children should be guided while in the care of the boarding personnel at the boarding program. There will be times when corrective action must be taken. The philosophy of discipline will articulate the way that correction—the how's, whys, and limits of discipline—will be administered. This document will be in harmony with the schoolwide philosophy of discipline, code of ethics and conduct for staff members.

Qualified boarding staff – given the limited licensure or diploma programs* available for the role of boarding staff, determining qualifications for boarding staff will require a combination of related training and personal life experiences. Related professional experience or training may include roles like teacher, youth minister, pastor, social work, counselor, coach, etc. Personal life experience could include roles like parent, volunteer work, Sunday school teacher, college residence assistant, camp counselor, youth group volunteer, foster parent, community volunteer (boy scouts, et al.), etc. In addition to life experience, the school will apply other criteria to determine suitability of candidates for a boarding role. These may include reference forms that include questions related to the unique role of boarding caregiving, interviews with the reference participants, background checks (required), on-site home visits and or interviews with the candidate, samples of work done with youth and possibly interviews with a representative sample of lives touched by the candidate.

*Boarding Training Australia is one organization that offers a Certificate IV level for boarding staff. BTA training is usually offered after a person is engaged to work in the boarding program. BTA certificate is recognized in Australia and other Commonwealth nations.

Risk Assessment – is a regular tool (online or local) that boarding programs employ to analyze levels of care and supervision for various activities that the program will provide.

Residential - living accommodations for students away from their parents.

Supervisory Coverage - provides critical watching and directing of students by appropriate staff toward a relevant purpose. This may include overnight building supervision, study times, room inspections, dining hall supervision, signing students out, or group outings. Individuals appointed to coverage will be well-trained in expectations and plans for the assignment, and course of action in case emergencies arise during these times. Numbers of staff involved may fluctuate due to the nature of the event.

APPENDIX A – Levels of Care in the Residence. Indicator 19.4

Boarding and Homestay programs come in all shapes, sizes, and traditions, and each is impacted by a variety of local realities and programmatic features. Of primary importance throughout the Residential Addendum, and specifically Indicator 19.4, is the safety and well-being of the students in residential care, boarding, or homestay. It is also recognized that the safety, well-being, and care in each residential program can be expressed in ways unique to each boarding tradition.

When considering traditional boarding (dormitory-style), it may be helpful to compare two distinct boarding types. One type of boarding features live-in caregivers in the residence home who also fill other significant job roles in the school, often a teaching role. Due to the twin demands of a boarding caregiver and the other assigned job, adequate supervision and caregiving is achieved in conjunction with others in the school community. This style of boarding sometimes includes a "prefect system" with student leaders involved in certain areas of supervision within their boarding residences.

The other type of boarding tries to mimic a biological family unit with a live-in married couple assigned to each boarding unit. That couple concentrates their job assignment on a myriad of matters related to each boarding student in their care like parents do with their own children. In some cases, this style of boarding also employs adult Resident Assistants (RAs) to assist the "dorm parents" in providing adequate caregiving coverage.

Given these two types, and everything in between, each school will need to provide evidence that it meets the twin values contained in Indicator 19.4, namely adequate supervisory coverage, and sufficient caregiving coverage to meet the personal needs of boarding students.

Evidence of adequate supervisory coverage** can include the use of non-boarding staff for consistent supervision during critical hours, prefect systems, near proximity of other adult staff, and security officers. Additional tools such as video monitoring systems, alarm systems, motion detectors, closed and gated campus, locked entries, etc., can be combined to deliver adequate supervisory care. The use of a risk assessment tool can assist leaders in determining adequate coverage for various activities.

Evidence of adequate caregiving coverage** should include a well-articulated system of care across various roles, departments, and policy systems that leaves no boarding student without sufficient access to supportive care (academic, emotional, physical, spiritual, etc.) from trusted adults.

When thoughtfully combined, supervision and caregiving coverage, capture the essence of Duty of Care** that all boarding programs must fulfill toward students in their care.

Likewise, schools with a homestay program must provide evidence that adequate coverage is always maintained for the well-being of the students in each host home. It is important to point out that the homestay environment is a regular home, and therefore supervision and caregiving are the responsibility of the host parents and must be worked out between them, depending on daily circumstances. When one or both parents are pulled away or distracted, they too must create a plan to ensure that the supervision and care of the students in their home are met.

**See glossary for definition

APPENDIX B - THE ADVOCACY SYSTEM

Schools and residential programs are expected to have safe and effective child safety programs which enable students to report concerns. Those programs typically have reporting mechanisms for student-to-student behaviors as well as adult-to-student behaviors that have caused or could cause a student harm. Most of those reporting mechanisms include staff within the school structure. In a residential program, when children and teens are away from their parents, it is especially important that these vulnerable students are trained on what situations need to be reported and to whom they should be reported. A good child safety program will include training for students and in a residential program, this training should be specific to the unique situations that may arise.

As a part of the child safety plan, schools with residential programs should develop an added layer of protection into their plans. While most schools have residential staff or international student program staff that are above reproach, it is possible that someone on staff could be intimidating to a student. For a student in the residential program, it is important to establish a person(s) that is completely independent of that structure to whom a student could go to, if they had a concern or fear. That person may be a pastor, Christian coach, or counselor, etc. whose primary reporting structure is not the school. Or it may be someone in a church with whom the school has regular association with, such as a counselor or youth pastor. The important idea is that students need to be educated on the concept and acquainted with at least one person who is not in the direct chain of command of an individual they might need to report. It is essential to empower young people with the knowledge that they can reach out, find an advocate, and protect themselves from harm. While the identification of an advocate is important, the training on how to do that is equally as important.

The school should help the boarding students get to know who the program advocate is. Sometimes this can be accomplished by an introductory BBQ with the residential program or by having the person give devotions or by substituting in the residential program for a dorm parents' night out. Student orientation programs and reminders during the year help the students know that they have someone to whom they could turn, should they need a listening ear. Students should be well-informed about who the program advocate is and how to contact them.

Anyone who functions in the advocate role should be trained in the purpose and parameters of the position. The advocate is not meant to be the first point of contact to report a concern. If the advocate finds that the student hasn't reported the concern, he/she will help the student find the right person and make the appropriate report first. They may need to go with them, or simply help prepare them to go on their own.

If a report/accusation of abuse or harassment has been made by the student and no action has been taken, the advocate should contact the Head of School or his/her designee and explain that the student doesn't feel the concern has been addressed. The advocate need not be informed by the student of any specifics, merely that a report was made to responsible school personnel, and nothing has resulted (as far as the student knows). The advocate would then have the rightful expectation of hearing a response from the Head of School or his/her designee within a day or two that the accusation had been received and is being investigated according to school policy. If it appears, in the opinion of the advocate, that policy was not followed, the advocate should appeal to higher authority (Board, Child Safety Officer, owner of the organization, etc.).

The advocate's role is not investigatory; their role as advocate ends when they are convinced that the school and residential program is following its policy of investigation and child protection and has reported that assurance to the student.