



## Teaching at Haileybury International School, Tianjin (China)

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Haileybury, Australia's largest independent school, operates Australia's first international school in China, where it teaches both the Australian VCE and Chinese curricula. It is situated near Beijing and caters to Chinese students seeking an international future. The school was established in 2013 as a Chinese private school and currently enrolls 650 students in Grades 1-12. Most students board at the School and are generally seeking a pathway to overseas universities upon graduation. The staff is a mixture of international and bilingual local teachers.



Haileybury is an unusual international school. It is a Sino-Australian school, which means that it brings together the best of Australian education with the best of Chinese education. Elements of the School are very familiar to western teachers, in particular the Senior School program and its pedagogy, but there are times when a more Chinese approach is adopted, such as in the boarding houses. International teachers are drawn from Australia and other western countries and work alongside bilingual Chinese teachers. The juxtaposition of eastern and western cultures is one of the most exciting elements of professional practice at Haileybury.



Classes average about twenty students. A typical weekday starts at 8 a.m. After Homeroom, there are seven teaching periods of fifty minutes each and a long lunch hour, before sports and activities at the end of the day. The teaching day finishes at 5.30 p.m. when the local students leave for home. The boarders then go off to dinner before returning to their classrooms at 7 p.m. to do their homework. A typical international teacher teaches twenty periods per week, along with two afternoons of sports and activities, an assembly and other duties such as; an evening assisting supervising night study or assisting in the evening boarding house, yard duty, assisting with homeroom. There is also professional development sessions and faculty meetings.

From time-to-time, the teacher will teach a demonstration lesson during our regular weekend open days for potential parents.

The School year is set by government regulation and starts around September 1. It is divided into two semesters, separated by the Chinese New Year (Spring Festival) in January/February. There are one-week teaching breaks for National Day (October 1), Christmas-New Year and in mid-Semester 2 (usually in May). There are several other lunar festivals during the year, for which a day's holiday is granted. (The lunar festival calendar sometimes requires China's working week to be modified, so the occasional weekend working day is possible.)

The School is located in the Peninsula International Town, a satellite town for Beijing being constructed at the centre of *JingJinJi*, the new national capital region of China encompassing Beijing, Tianjin and surrounding areas, with a current population exceeding 110 million. The School is near the main expressway between the two cities in a semi-rural area undergoing rapid development. It is about an hour by car from Beijing CBD and from Beijing International Airport, and 75 minutes from the Tianjin CBD.



Teachers live in school-supplied, furnished, two-bedroom apartments in the Taitou village complex, about 20 minutes walk from the School. The apartments are air-conditioned and connected to the internet and local cable TV. The village has a semi-rural character, though this is changing fast. It offers basic village shops and restaurants, but our regular weekend shuttle buses also provide access to the Beijing expatriate shopping district and supermarkets in surrounding towns. Though the School has its own doctors and clinic, most expatriates prefer to use their school medical insurance to access high-quality western medical facilities in Beijing.



Teachers are employed on a Chinese contract for their time in China and will be helped to get a Work Permit (applicants should be under 58), which will also allow dependants to accompany them. They are paid their net salary (less income tax and statutory social insurance) in local currency (*renminbi, yuan*) by direct deposit into their local bank account and may be withdrawn as cash by debit card through the ATM system. If desired, the School will assist in remitting all or part of this salary overseas.

A gratuity will be paid upon successful completion of the full term of the contract and the Chinese government will return social insurance payments to the teacher when he/she finally departs from China.

Teachers are well supported by the School and opportunities for professional development are available. A laptop and teaching resources are supplied for professional use, meals are subsidised and there are teacher workrooms and a teachers' lounge within the main teaching building. The expatriate community is a strong one, and is well sustained by management.

For most westerners, however, working in China, especially in a Sino-Australian school, is full of new, often unexpected but fulfilling experiences. Be prepared for surprises when two cultures come together, and enjoy the learning that goes with them.