

*picture credit: Mount Kelly

The number of students from West Africa choosing to study in the UK has increased by 80% year on year, according to recent Home Office statistics.*

Recently, I interviewed some parents i have been advising who have sent their daughters and sons to leading British boarding schools to discover the driving forces behind this demand.

High-quality academic standards.

One father explained he chose a well-known boarding school in the South West for his two boys because of “a desire to lay the foundation for a first-class education.”

He wanted his sons to “benefit from the British public schools' centuries-long experience and culture in moulding young people into confident, independent adults.”

He added that he invested in their education to provide them “a broad-based international education as a deliberate step to a similar career.”

Traditional values and a wide range of opportunities.

Another father told me that “moral standards and traditional British conservative values within a friendly, safe and secure environment” were the reasons why he chose a school on the South Coast for his child.

“There are more sporting activities and extracurricular options on offer,” he enthused. “British schools are well-equipped and have made great investments in infrastructure... particularly in music, science and mathematics.”

Well-rounded education.

A mother I chatted to who sends her third child to the UK this September said that she wanted a “balance of academic, extracurricular and etiquette” to give her children a “well-rounded education that would set them up well for the future.”

She emphasised the importance of an international environment that enables them to “socialise with almost 40 different nationalities.”

“My attraction to British boarding schools is the fact that the focus is on building the child holistically not only on academic grades,” explained a mother based in Kenya.

She added, “I like the rigour and discipline that is instilled in the children's lives both academically and at a personal level.”

“The sense of responsibility and independence is cultivated through the various programs that prepare the child to handle life in future and most importantly supporting the child to grow to his or her full potential,” she concluded.

With benefits like this, it is no wonder that British boarding schools are more popular than ever before.

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** According to a Home Office report in March 2021, visas granted to Nigerian students to enrol at school and higher educational establishments rose by 83% year on year to 17,423.*