

LIFE IN THE UK

Your child will have a busy life at school—studying and taking part in activities. We are here to support you and them to ensure they have the best possible time while they are at school and also when staying with our host families.

Some students like to use their holidays as a time to relax—to meet with friends, study and visit different places in the UK. We have host families in London, but these are only available for our older students who are able to visit London and do some sight-seeing and shopping without adult supervision.

We are always contactable during term time and holidays, but it is essential that your child takes care and does not put themselves in any situation that can be deemed risky or dangerous. It is essential that when they are at school they adhere to school rules—signing in and out when they leave school to visit town so that school staff are always aware of where they are.

We insist that host families and students swap mobile numbers so they can keep in touch and let the host family know if they have a problem or will return later than expected. When staying with a host family it is also polite if your child informs the family if they do not require a meal— so that the host family don't prepare a meal unnecessarily.

We will meet with your child once they have settled into school and ensure they have our contact details as below so that they can contact us at any time.

CONTACT :00 44 7968 361761/00 44 1823 703199



GUARDIANS UK HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS

**GUARDIANS UK
STAPLEGROVE ROAD,
TAUNTON, SOMERSET, TA2 6AD
UNITED KINGDOM**

**TEL: 00 44 1823 703199
24 hour emergency mobile: 00 44 7968 361761
Email: info@guardiansuk.com
www.guardiansuk.com**

What is a Guardian ?

Hello and welcome to Guardians UK. A member of Guardians UK will always be available to help you and your child when they are at school, with a host family or travelling. Our team are: Alison Warne, Guardianship Manager and Tracey Matthews and Maria Lamb, the Assistant Guardianship Managers.

Our contact details are shown on the front of the handbook and you can contact us at any time if you have any questions, concerns or just want to know how things are going. Our mobile phone is always with one of the team if you have any concerns or there is an emergency outside of office hours. We also monitor our emails regularly.

WHAT WE DO:

- * We are based in Taunton
- * We have students in schools around the South West of England
- * We are here to make your child feel supported and secure
- * We will visit each term
- * We operate a 24-hour Emergency Contact Mobile
- * We are always nearby if needed
- * We will arrange pocket money as necessary
- * We will attend school events and parents evenings if you would like us to
- * We will keep in regular contact by text or email

TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

To and from the airport and host families by train, coach, taxi or personal driver.

HOLIDAYS

Arranging host family accommodation during half term, exeat and longer holidays.

HOST FAMILIES AND DRIVERS

Our Host Families and Drivers are all carefully picked and chosen by us and undergo DBS clearance. We will give you details and photos of the host family and their house, so you feel comfortable about where your child will be staying and we try to pick the host family we feel is best suited to your

What do we expect from parents?

What we expect from parents—travel details, host family requirements

We will contact you well in advance to ask for your plans for the next holiday. If you book flights for the whole year or well in advance please let us have this information.

We will ask you for flight details for the main holidays and it is important that we have both flights—returning home and then coming back to school at the start of term—as all schools require this information before students depart.

If you require a host family for half term, longer holidays or any other time during the term we will send you host family information and confirmation of arrangements. If you decide to cancel the host family booking at a later date our cancellation arrangements with our host families are as follows:

7 days or less—50% payment to host family

48 hours or less—100% payment to host family.

Cancellation of contract—we require 1 term's notice for the cancellation of our contract with you unless your child is in Year 13 and leaving school and moving onto university at the end of that year.

We are accredited by AEGIS and you may be contacted by us or AEGIS to give feedback and comments or to complete a questionnaire about our work with you.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM SCHOOL

Your child will spend most of their time at school and in their boarding house and during this time they are the responsibility of school staff and house staff. On some occasions—sickness or suspension—schools will contact us as guardians and ask for us to arrange for your child to stay with a host family. At that time either they or we will inform you of the arrangements—depending on the reason that your child must leave school.

Most school trips are the responsibility of the school and staff running the trip. However, if you arrange for your child to go to an interview at another school or to a university open day we can assist with arrangements and this is our responsibility to organise and inform you and school of the details.

Schools offer full boarding for your child—3 meals, snacks, accommodation, supervision, academic supervision. We will attend Parents Meetings if you would like us to—but you will receive regular reports and assessment marks for your child while they are at school and contact from tutors.

POLICIES: All our Policies can be found on our website: www.guardianksuk.com. These include: Child Protection and Safeguarding, Missing Student, Behaviour, Data Protection, Complaints, Health & Safety & Whistleblowing.

SAFEGUARDING : Safeguarding students is of utmost importance to us and at the heart of everything we do. Our host families, like our own staff, undergo safeguarding training and are aware that if any issues concerning our students are brought to their attention when they are hosting they must contact us immediately.

SOCIALISING – We encourage your child to talk with the host family as much as possible and to tell the family about themselves and their interests. Host families are asked to encourage the students to speak English at all times, even with people who speak their own language. It is not polite to speak in your own language in front of people who do not understand it.

SMOKING – All Schools have a strict **NO SMOKING, NO DRUGS** and **NO OTHER SUBSTANCES** policy please. We would ask you to ensure that your child respects this rule as well as:

ALCOHOL - Students are not allowed to drink alcohol when they are staying with our host families.

BANK ACCOUNTS & POCKET MONEY— We can give your child pocket money from the disbursement account we hold. If you would prefer they have a bank account we can arrange for an account to be opened with a UK bank. It is essential that you explain to your child that bank and credit cards should be looked after carefully and no information given out to another person. We will also advise about this.

Our commitment to you—what we do.

As your child's guardians we are always on hand to assist you, your child and their school. If you have any concerns then you can call us during the day or email us. If it is an emergency then you can call our mobile number at any time.

Suspensions & illness: If your child is suspended for any reason we will organise a host family for them to stay with and organise the transport to the host family and back to school.

Some schools do not have the facilities to keep students in school if there are certain illnesses and viruses and will request for your child to go to a host family. Again we will organise this for you.

Drivers and travel: We have a number of our own drivers who will accompany students to the airport and offer an unaccompanied minor service. We will make all transfer arrangements if you require us to do so. We also work closely with local taxi companies—all drivers and taxi drivers have DBS checks.

Some schools run buses to and from the airports at the end and beginning of term and half terms. We are aware of these and will inform you accordingly so that you can use these services for your child—it is generally a cheaper way to travel to the airport.

Academic & pastoral progress: You will receive regular academic progress reports for your child. If you would like us to attend Parents Evenings on your behalf please let us know. We don't always receive notifications of these from schools, so if you get an email please forward to us. Equally we are here to help with any pastoral issues and to act as your representative. If we are required to deal with any pastoral issues we will keep you informed until things have been sorted out.

Complaints procedure: We have a complaints procedure. Please refer to our Complaints Policy on our website.

Expenses—All expenses will be charged to the disbursement account we hold. At the end of each term we will send an invoice for the next term's fees plus a copy of the account showing expenditure over the past term. We will check with you if your child requests large amounts of money, or regular amounts that you haven't given permission for. We can assist with the setting up of bank accounts if required.

What is a Host Family ?

We have many host families who welcome students to their homes for half terms, longer holidays and exets if your child's school has these. They provide accommodation, three meals per day, laundry and care when your child is not at school. We expect our host families to treat your child as one of their own family and for them to be included in mealtimes and activities.

Your child will usually have their own room unless they would like to share with a friend. Some host families will also have other students staying in their home at the same time.

We will send you a profile of the host family where your child will be staying so that you have some information about them and their house.

We hope that your child will feel happy with their host family right from the start. We do try to put students with the same host family, but this is not always possible. Equally, you or your child may request that they stay in a different town or city, or stay with a different type of family that you feel they may be better suited to. We are very flexible about this and always get feedback after visits.

Some families have their own children at home, whilst the children of other families have now grown up and moved away. Some families have pets, cats, dogs or other animals, and it is important for us to know if your child has a problem with pets.

You can expect our families to care for your child as they would their own. We are the first point of contact for you and host families and we are always available for you to contact us during holidays when your child may be with a host family should there be anything you wish to discuss or raise with us.

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS STAYING WITH A HOST FAMILY NEITHER THEY NOR GUARDIANS UK ARE LIABLE FOR THE CONDUCT OF YOUR CHILD. ANY COSTS INCURRED DUE TO THEIR BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.