

MY GUARDIANS Ltd

Educational Consultants & Guardians

Student Handbook

Updated January 2021

Our 24-hour Emergency Phone Number: +44 (0) 7919425660, Mrs Irina Bowman, Your Educational Guardian.

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1. Welcome & Introduction

As your parents live overseas they are unable to care for you when you are out of school. We take on this responsibility particularly during exeats and other times when the school is closed.

My Guardians' Director, Irina Bowman, is the official guardian to all students under My Guardians care.

My Guardians are on call 24 hours every day to help you with any difficulties or problems that may arise.

2. The Role of your Guardian and Host Family

Our responsibilities include:

- Acting on behalf of your parents in situations where they are unable to do so due to distance or timing.
- ♣ Looking after your welfare in the UK when the school is closed for holidays.
- Providing a host family for you to stay with during half term and exeat weekends when the school is closed
- Assisting you with things you may need school uniform, sports equipment, mobile phone, UK 'pay as you go' mobile sim-card, etc.
- Assisting you with collecting BRP from the post office if required by school and also helping you with police registration, if required.
- Helping you arrange your travel both in the UK (taxi, train or bus) and back home (flight bookings, transfers).
- Helping you if things go wrong: if you get into trouble at school you may be suspended and asked to leave the school for a period, at short notice or if you get ill and need to go to hospital, or away from school.
- ♣ Being available for you anytime, particularly if you are worried about things like school, friends and the host family you stay with. Our carefully selected and inspected host families are fully checked and required to protect, care for and provide full board and lodging for you.

3. Responsibilities as a Student

Code of Conduct for Guardianship Students

My Guardians students are expected to follow our Students Code of Conduct.

Positive behaviour is expected of all our students during their stay with host families. Positive behaviour is encouraged through Homestay Handbook and rules for guardianship students. My Guardians host families are setting the good examples and having procedures for responding to various situations.

My Guardians students should:

- Treat their host family and other pupils with respect.
- Treat host family home with respect.
- Follow instructions given by their host.
- Be honest.
- Not use offensive language.
- ♣ Dress appropriately at host family and on any excursions, visits and activities.

When staying with host family students should:

- Follow all rules set by their hosts and behave in a courteous, respectful and cooperative manner.
- Leave their bedroom and any facilities used in the home clean and tidy after use.
- Be respectful of the family by being quiet during the night when others are asleep.
- Respect the privacy of the host family and not enter any private areas of the house without their permission.
- If given parental permission to go out unaccompanied, give an approximate time they will be home, and always follow curfew times.
- Remain contactable by mobile phone at all times.

Health and safety in the home:

- Let My Guardians know about their medical conditions and provide details of any medication they are taking while staying with host family.
- Use equipment in the home safely and in accordance with safety instructions given to them by their host.
- Tell their host family about any accidents or safety-related incidents.
- Follow all fire and other home safety advice given to them by their host.

My Guardians students should:

- Pay attention to and follow welfare, health and safety instructions given by their host.
- Always carry a fully charged mobile phone, which is switched on, and respond to phone calls.
- 4 Always carry their mobile phone with My Guardians emergency contact number stored in the phone.
- ♣ Behave in a good manner.

Discrimination.

My Guardians will not tolerate discrimination in any form. Students should behave in a way that has a positive effect on others and not discriminatory on any grounds, including age, gender, race, nationality, culture, religion, pregnancy and maternity, sexuality, disability, health, ability, status and appearance.

Bullying.

See also My Guardians Bullying Policy and Procedure.

Bullying, including Cyber-bullying, in any form will not be tolerated.

Use of the Internet and Mobile Electronic Devices.

See also our E-Safety Policy and Procedure.

My Guardians students under 18 years will be informed that network and Internet use on a homestay host's computer will be monitored.

My Guardians students should:

- Follow the guidance in My Guardians E-safety policy.
- Be vigilant about their safety when using the Internet and, specifically, not provide personal details, contact information or images to, or arrange to meet, people unknown to them.
- Not photograph or video other guardianship students or hosts and their families without their consent.
- ♣ Not post images of My Guardians students or hosts and their families on the Internet without permission.
- Not access illegal material.
- Not download any file to the homestay host's computer without permission.
- Not change the settings on the homestay host's computer without permission.

Alcohol and Illegal Substances.

My Guardians students should not:

- Store, consume or be under the influence of alcohol in the host's home if they are under the age of 18 years old.
- ♣ Purchase or consume alcohol in a public place or in licenced premises if under the age of 18 years.
- ≠ Store, solicit, purchase or use illegal substances (drugs) at any time.

Smoking.

My Guardians students should not:

- Smoke anywhere in the host's home unless permitted to do so and over the age of 18 years old.
- Purchase tobacco products if under the age of 18 years old.

Criminal Activity.

My Guardians will not tolerate criminal activity in any form. UK Laws and Legislation will be covered in each guardianship student induction. Guardianship students must be made aware that UK Laws will differ from the laws in their own countries.

Intimidation, Aggression and Violence.

My Guardians will not tolerate intimidation, aggression and violence in any form. Any student breaking UK law, or persisting in serious anti-social behaviour, will be subject to My Guardians disciplinary procedures. In serious cases, My Guardians students may be asked to leave our guardianship programme.

4. Emergencies & Staying Safe.

My Guardians will assist 24 hours a day. In the case of emergencies, please ring our emergency number +44 (0) 7919425660.

Medical Emergency & Sickness.

If you are sick and need medical help, tell the host family and they will make an appointment for you to see the family doctor. You have been registered with the NHS by the school. Some students also have private medical insurance and we should have been informed by your parents if you one of them. If the illness becomes more serious or hospitalisation needed, your host will immediately ring our emergency number: +44 (0) 7919425660.

5. The Process for Arriving in the UK.

Details on Airport Arrival.

There are three points where you may be delayed:

- Immigration (especially if you are a young child travelling alone),
- Luggage collection,
- Customs control.

If you are travelling alone, please be prepared to answer questions from immigration about your school and who is meeting you at the airport. We will inform you who is meeting you!

Students Travel.

For your travel between the airport and school, or between the host family and school, My Guardians have drivers available to meet and take you to any address in the UK. Travel by rail and coach can be arranged for economical long distance transfer cost. If we have booked a taxi for you to travel, please be certain to keep your mobile switched on so that we can contact you. Your driver will be meeting you in arrival lounge once you come through the customs. He will be holding a small plaque with your name on it. If you do not find your driver within 10-15 minutes waiting, please ring My Guardians emergency number +44 (0) 7919425660 and we will find your driver for you!

Passport, BRP and Money.

Britain is a safe place, but of course, you should be as careful as you would be in your own country. This means you should look after your passport and your money. Leave your passport, BRP and your air ticket with your host. Look after your debit and credit card and only carry small amount of cash when you do out.

6. British Customs and Etiquette.

British custom differ from customs in your country and here are just some useful tips for you to follow:

- ♣ Being polite British people say "please" and "thank you" a lot, and you should too when you are in the UK. We like to say "sorry" too – sometimes even when it's not our fault!
- Queuing the British love to queue! Check to see if people are queuing in shops or at bus stops so that you don't accidentally go to the front of the queue. If you're not sure you can ask; "Is this the queue?"
- Food In the UK, people usually eat a light lunch around midday and have the main meal in the

evening about 6-7pm. Do tell your host family if you really don't like something or you are hungry.

7. Personal Safety and the Care of Valuable Possessions.

- Please take care of your personal safety and pay attention to and follow welfare, health and safety instructions given by their homestay hosts.
- If you go out with your host or allowed to go out locally on your own or with your friends, always carry a fully charged mobile phone which is switched on. You should have My Guardians emergency contact number and your host number stored in the phone.
- Take special care of your valuable possessions including passport and BMP card.
- It is important to carry all your documents when arriving to UK, including your parental consent letter and insurance documents, in case you are questioned at immigration.
- ♣ Please make sure you do not carry large amounts of money, and whatever money and credit cards you carry is kept in a closed bag in a purse or wallet.

8. Information on Living with a Host Family.

■ We place our students with host families when schools are closed for half terms and exeat weekends. You may find that there is more than one student staying with a host family at any one time. This can work very well, as it offers you additional company and friendship during your holiday period.

Staying with one of our host families is a wonderful opportunity to learn and understand about life in the UK. Here are some general points to help you make the most of this.

- 4 Your hosts invite you to stay with them in their family home. This is very different from living in a hotel! Please behave as a polite and respectful guest.
- Speak to your host family about the "rules" of the household; for example, the best time to use the bathroom, what time they eat dinner, when the washing will be done, use of the phone etc.
- 4 You are invited to eat your evening meals together and this is a great time to talk to them and to learn about the English way of life.
- If you are going to miss the evening meal, please phone your host family to let them know. Even better, tell them in advance so they can plan their shopping and cooking.
- Please ask your host family for permission if you want to invite friends back to the house for a short stay. Overnight guests are not permitted.
- ♣ If you break or damage anything, please tell your host family. These things happen sometimes!
- ♣ Make sure that you spend time with your hosts each evening do not spend the whole evening in your bedroom.
- Make your bed and keep your room tidy.
- If you are ill, tell your host family or phone My Guardians so that we can help or call a doctor if necessary.
- ▶ Your hosts are concerned for your welfare. They work with My Guardians to help and support you.

Students are expected to respect their host family's way of life in return for being accepted as a guest. Hosts are encouraged to include you in family life and to arrange activities and excursions. Please note, guardianship responsibilities remain with My Guardians during your stay with a host family, so you should speak to us about any concerns you may have. We will always do our best to help.

Students sometimes inform us that they wish to make alternative arrangements for one or more nights' accommodation during half terms and exeat weekends. We have an obligation to your parents and schools to care for and protect our students and to provide safe host family accommodation. Should you wish to consider alternative half term or exeat care arrangements, My Guardians will require *a written permission from your parents* and contact details of a named adult, residing in the UK, who will take responsibility for the student during the stay.

9. Meal times and what are provided?

♣ Students are entitled to three meals per day. English food tends to be fairly simple compared with some cuisines, but should always be wholesome and nourishing. English people usually eat their evening meal fairly early, often around 18.00 pm.

Your family may serve snacks and drinks between meals or allow you to help yourself. For breakfast you should get toast and cereal, and perhaps a cooked breakfast on occasions. Lunch is normally light, perhaps salad, and sandwiches, cheese on toast and fruit or yoghurt. Dinner should include fish or chicken or red meat, vegetables and a dessert.

If you have things you like or don't like please tell your host and they will try and provide accordingly. If you are hungry, please don't help yourself – ask the host family. Your family may be very interested in your own country's food – offer to cook!

- Be sure to watch your table manners:
 - Wait until everyone is seated at the table and has their food before you begin.
 - If you want something, ask for it to be passed to you. English people use 'please' and 'thank you' frequently, please.
 - Do not forget to do the same.
 - 4 It is the English custom to eat quietly, with your mouth closed.
 - Stay at the table until everyone has finished and then ask to leave.
 - When you leave the table, ask if you can help by taking your dishes to the kitchen, and leave them by the sink or place them in the dishwasher.

Host Family Home and Your Room.

The family home may, of course, be very different from your own, but will be clean and comfortable. You will be provided with a single or twin room (one or two beds). Clean bedding and a towel are provided. The room will have some storage facility and a desk and adequate lighting for working. If there is not a table or desk and chair in the bedroom there will be another area in the house you can use for your homework.

Shower and Bathroom.

Your host family may need to use the bathroom as well as you and will tell you the most convenient time for you to use the bathroom and shower in the mornings and evenings. Remember that hot water may be limited, so you should only spend about 10 minutes in the shower. Make sure the shower curtain is on the inside of the shower cubicle to avoid flooding the bathroom.

10. Laundry Arrangements.

Hosts are happy to help you with any washing you may have, especially during a longer break like half term. Ask your host if they would mind doing the washing for you (or offer to do it yourself) and where to put your dirty clothes. They will and return them to you.

11. Taking Care of Yourself - Personal Hygiene.

Most English people bathe or shower once a day. In Europe and overseas bathing customs differ. Many people, for example, do not bathe as often. The same may apply to washing clothes. If you are not accustomed to bathing more than three or four times a week, the host family and friends may become offended by your body odour. Be sensitive about how you look and smell.

12. Homesickness - signs of symptoms and how to cope with it & where to get help.

We understand that it can be difficult to be away from home, especially if it is for the first time. It may take some time to feel at home here in the UK, this is natural because a lot of things are happening – you have a new place to live, you are meeting new people and learning about a new culture and language! Relax and take some time, you should feel better after a few weeks. If you would like to speak to us, you can contact us at any time. You can also contact My Guardians if you have a personal problem, or need some advice or

support.

Some children will become homesick; most will cope with these feelings. Try to join clubs or get involved in activities early on before isolation or loneliness sets in.

Going to a new country and being part of a new culture can be confusing and difficult. Try to learn as much about the British culture, customs and behaviour as possible. People will be more helpful and much kinder if you are polite and show respect for others.

13. Electrical Appliances and Safety.

Please use all electrical appliances and electrical equipment in the home safely and in accordance with safety instructions given to you by your host. Special care should be taken when using overseas phone charges and laptop power devices. This might pose a significant risk, so we always advice our students to purchase UK version. You should immediately tell your host family about any accidents or safety-related incidents.

14. Fire Prevention & Precautions.

While staying with your host family in their home, please follow all fire and other home safety advice given to you by their host. You should be particularly careful about electrical items – do not leave your computer or tablet switched on, on your bed, or leave hair straighteners switched on after use and don't use uncertified plug adaptors or chargers.

15. What to Do in a Medical Emergency.

Please let your host know if you feel unwell or injured! Your host will help you by giving you some medication (with your parents consent), take you to see the local doctor and take you to hospital, if required. Your host family will also contact us.

16. Permission for Visiting from Parents.

Parental Authority:

Schools frequently need a parent or guardian to sign for parental permission for you to participate in school activities and excursions. Our policy is to forward these to your parents for approval if the cost is over £50.00 and also if the activity is strenuous or potentially dangerous. Otherwise we will sign, unless your parents have indicated otherwise.

Other permissions from parents:

We will also seek your parents permission for visiting places of interest local to school or host family area, permission for shopping on your own or being accompanied by host family, depending on your age. We will need your parents written permission if you are travelling further afield and attending various excursions.

17. Curfew & Bed Times.

If you are staying in a homestay, please follow the rules regarding curfew - time you have to be home. You can go out unaccompanied if you are over the age of 14 and if parental permission given to My Guardians in writing.

- Aged under 14 years old must be accompanied by an adult member of their host family,
- Aged 14 year olds should be home no later than 21.00pm,
- Aged 15-16 years old 22.00 pm at the latest,
- Aged 17-18 years old no later than 23.00 pm,

You should not go to bed too late and be respectful of the family by being quiet during the night when people are sleeping. Recommended bedtime is 22.00pm-23.00pm, depending on your age. Please keep in contact with your host so they know what time to expect you home. If you are delayed – you

must phone the host family immediately. If you are in serious difficulty, phone our emergency number and possibly call the police on 999.

18. English Laws including Smoking, Drinking, Sexual Activity, Illegal substances.

Our guardianship students are not allowed:

- Staying away overnight is forbidden, unless My Guardians have already received specific permission, in writing, from your parents.
- Friends overnight you must not have other friends to stay overnight unless they have contacted My Guardians for consent beforehand.
- Having any friends of the opposite sex in your bedroom.
- Using the host family's phone or computer without their permission.
- Hair colour and body piercing Schools do not allow the students to colour their hair and you may not use hair dye in hosts' homes. It is the same for body piercing.
- Smoking is not allowed at school or while staying with host families.
- ♣ Drugs The use of all non-prescription drugs is illegal for anyone in the UK. This means that you may only take drugs and medicines issued by your own doctor, hospital doctor or those that you can buy from the chemist without a prescription.
- ♣ Drink In UK you have to be 18 years of age to be able to buy and drink alcohol. These restrictions will be one of the important rules laid down by your school. Same applies while staying with host family.
- 4 You must be aware that UK Laws differ from the laws in your own countries.

19. Prevent- Anti-Radicalisation.

See also Appendix 6 (Anti-Radicalisation – Prevent Duty Policy).

My Guardians will not tolerate extremists' views. It is the responsibility of all schools and guardianship organisations to protecting vulnerable students from being drawn into Terrorism and it its part of the Prevent strategy. The main aim of the Prevent strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

20. Safe use of the Internet, access to Wi-Fi.

♣ Telephone and Internet Usage.

Most families have a wireless broadband connection, and many are happy for you to use this for reasonable access to the Internet from a laptop computer (such as social networking). If you are allowed to make telephone calls from the host family telephone always ask permission to do so beforehand. If you are allowed to receive telephone calls, arrange for people to call you after 9.00am and before 9.00pm.

4 Online safety and behaviour.

There is no doubt that technologies including the Internet and mobile phones offer tremendous opportunities for students, however as with any environment there are also risks. Risks associated with the Internet, mobiles and social networking sites and other interactive services include:

- Cyber-bullying,
- Grooming and potential abuse by online predators,
- Identity theft,
- Exposure to inappropriate content including self-harm.

Students are responsible for their actions, conduct and behaviour on the Internet in the same way that they are responsible at school during classes or during social activities. Use of technology should be safe, responsible and legal.

Stay Safe online.

- ♣ Do not give your personal details to anyone online (for example, full name, contact details).
- Do not meet with people who you have met online as it can be dangerous.

- ♣ Do not accept messages, emails or open files from people you do not know or trust as some can contain viruses or nasty messages.
- If something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried tell your parent, host family or My Guardians member of staff.

21. Bullying & Cyber- Bullying - Awareness, Help & Guidance.

My Guardians will not tolerate bullying or cyber-bulling. Students should behave in a way that has a positive effect on others and not discriminate on any grounds, including age, gender, race, nationality, culture, religion, sexuality, disability, health, ability, status and appearance.

If someone is hurting you or your friends, there are people who can help you and stop people from making you feel scared or hurt. You should tell someone you trust. If you would like to speak to someone or report a bulling or cyber-bullying, please contact the following staff member: Mrs Irina Bowman +44(0) 7919425660. Please also read Appendix 5 of our Safeguarding Policy - Bulling including Cyber-bulling & E-safety Guidelines.

22. <u>List of Useful Contacts – telephone numbers and websites e.g. ChildLine, LSP</u> (formerly LSCB) number, The Children's Commissioner.

Staying safe and who to turn to, in case of an emergency:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

At My Guardians person responsible for child protection is: Mrs Irina Bowman, Designated Safeguarding Lead. Telephone: +44 (0) 7919425660, email: info@myguardians.co.uk.

You should call the Designated Safeguarding Lead first to report an issue.

If you think you are in immediate danger: contact the police by calling 999, otherwise, call 101 & ask for the Safeguarding Coordination Unit, in case of safeguarding issues.

Contact Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Board on 03000411111.

National contacts:

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 http://:crimestoppers-uk.org.

Childline 0800 1111.

Kidscape Bullying Helpline 020 7730 3300.

Children's Commissioner Anne Longfield 0800 528 0731 advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

23. Additional Information:

Mobile phone registration & SIM cards.

My Guardians personnel can assist you with buying mobile phone or UK Pay as you go mobile sim card.

Safe and courteous use of your mobile phone & homestay telephone.

If you are allowed to make telephone calls from the host family telephone always ask permission to do so beforehand. If you are allowed to receive telephone calls, arrange for people to call you after 9.00am and before 9.00pm. Please respect your host family and do not use your mobile phone during meal times, late at night and in other times that might not be suitable.

Food Hygiene.

Your host family will cook delicious meals for you and offer you some snacks. But should you decide to buy some of your favourite snacks for yourself, this would be also fine. Make sure you store snacks properly and ask your host if your can keep them in the special sealed container in the kitchen or in the fridge if needed. Keeping good food hygiene is important!

Registering with a Doctor, Private Medical Insurance & Dentist.

Your school will register you with a local doctor's surgery. We advise parents to join private medical insurance scheme, which can be bought via school. Schools also offer dentist scheme for their students and we also highly recommend purchasing this cover as well. School can register you with local dentist for cases of emergency.

Using Private Cars & Taxis, Use of Seat Belts.

We use private hire cars and taxis companies, known to us, to transfer our students. Using seat belts in cars is required by Law!

Using public transport - including permission and booking tickets etc. (28).

We always recommend out students of any age to use transfers arranged by us or by schools for airport arrivals and departures. Occasionally, for other purposes, e.g. trips to London, students over the age of 16 use public transport and we can help them with booking tickets.

Traffic safety as a pedestrian & cyclist.

Remember that we drive on the left in England! Always be careful when you are crossing the road.

Pocket Money.

Your pocket money can be deposited into a bank account and handled by you or given to your school to administer. Older students handle their own pocket money, with younger students having their pocket money administered by the school.

If you have no pocket money when staying with the host family, we can cover the cost of your entrance for activities such as swimming or cinema (to a maximum of £30).

Setting up a bank account (31).

My Guardians or your school will help you to open a bank account when you arrive in the UK, if this is necessary.

Learning to drive.

Some schools will allow you to have driving lessons during weekends or other times when you are free.

Having regard for school rules when living with a homestay as well.

You should take school rules into account when living with a host family too!

24. Safeguarding Policy - Summary.

What is safeguarding?

My Guardians has a duty of care toward young people who use our services. We have a policy and procedures in place to help protect our students from harm and for reference in case something goes wrong. All staff members are responsible for students' safeguarding.

If someone is hurting you or your friends, there are people who can help you and stop people from making you feel scared or hurt. You should tell someone you trust:

Who can I speak to?

If you would like to speak to someone or report a safeguarding issue, please contact the following staff member (trained to Level 3 in Safeguarding):

Designated person: Mrs Irina Bowman +44 (0) 7919425660.

- You can also tell your guardian, your host family, teacher, parents, grandparents or other members of your family who may be able to help, or can tell a friend;
- Let people help to make things better by stopping the person from hurting you or your friends.

The person at My Guardians who has special responsibility for helping you if someone's hurting you or your friends is Mrs Irina Bowman.

What is an allegation?

Information that shows an adult may have:

- Behaved in a way that has/may have harmed a child,
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child,
- ♣ Behaved towards a child in such a way that indicates she/he would pose a risk of harm if working closely or regularly with a child.

Types of abuse: grooming, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, neglect and controlling, coercive and threatening behaviours. If you have a concern about any of the above, please contact My Guardians

Child Protection Designated Lead (DSL).

The person at My Guardians who has special responsibility for helping you if someone's hurting you or your friends is Mrs Irina Bowman.

For further information on safeguarding students, please view the following:

Full Safeguarding Policy.

25. Please Sign!

I have received and agree to read the guidelines in the Student Handbook and will abide with the rules listed in it.

Name of Student:	Age:
Signed:	Date:

Tel: +44(0) 7919425660, email: info@myguardians.co.uk My Guardians ltd is registered in England & Wales, Registration Number 8920466, Registered Office: Woodland Steep, Sevenoaks Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN159DS, UK