

## KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

Tellus Education Group understands that sending Under 18s to the UK for a study programme is a big step for many parents who need to understand how their children will be cared for. We have prepared this brief guide to reassure parents that we have the safeguards and procedures in place to ensure their children will be safe during their stay with us. The information presented here are extracts taken from various documents, guides, policies and procedures that underpin the systems Tellus Education Group operates throughout their schools.

### Recruitment and selection of staff

Tellus Education Group practices 'safe recruitment' and seeks to only recruit people of the highest caliber to do the job advertised. Each candidate must submit an application form detailing why they are suitable for the role. If invited for interview, their qualifications and references are carefully checked. All staff working with young learners are thoroughly 'vetted' by being Police Checked with an enhanced disclosure including barred list checks. This is achieved through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the British Home Office. All staff must complete a probationary period before they are offered regular work.

We take the safety and protection of young learners very seriously and have detailed safeguarding measures in place. For example, we have full-time Designated Safeguarding Persons and all staff have been trained in how to deal quickly and efficiently with incidents involving young learners. See the Safeguarding Code of Conduct below.

Tellus Education Group operates safe schools in safe locations. The welfare and well-being of everyone is a top priority.

### Recruitment and selection of Homestay Providers

All the Homestay Providers we use are carefully selected, recruited and monitored to ensure they meet our standards. Here is the procedure we follow when recruiting new host families:

- Each Homestay Provider is interviewed by our Accommodation Officer to ensure suitability.
- An initial inspection of the homestay accommodation is carried out. Then every two years.
- For under 18s (U18) students, the lead member of the host family will be subject to DBS and barred list checks.
- We carry out "spot inspections" of homestays.
- Homestay Providers sign a contract which sets out what is required of them in writing and the rules for what students may do outside the scheduled activity times, particularly what time they are expected home at night; students are informed of these curfew times at the welcome presentation on their first morning in the school.
- Homestay Providers are aware that a responsible adult will always be present overnight and

normally present when students under 16 are at home.

- Students complete a feedback questionnaire within the first week to enable us to check they are happy in their accommodation.

If any problems arise, they are investigated quickly and thoroughly and resolved to the satisfaction of everyone. Under 18s only share accommodation with other Under 18s, they do not share accommodation with other adult guests. There are no more than 4 students staying with a host family at any one time.

## Introduction and orientation

All students, group leaders and accompanying tutors are invited to a welcome meeting on the first Monday of their arrival. At this meeting they are told about:

- The location.
- The school.
- Key members of staff.
- Health & Safety.
- The rules and regulations.
- Accommodation.
- The social programme.
- Important contact information.

They also receive a 'welcome pack' containing useful information, including emergency contact numbers. They are given a map and a tour of the city. This provides all the information necessary. If any additional information is required for particular groups, this is also given out at the time.

## Food

The food in the UK might be very different from what some of our students are used to. When eating out, there are many different types of food to choose from and prices vary depending on what's required and where students go. England has a wide range of international foods to choose from so there is something for everyone. Our Homestay Providers mostly cook traditional English food and students eat with them at designated meal times. Food is freshly prepared and is generally healthy and tasty but may not be what some students expect.

Please understand that, even if the food is very different from what some students are used to, most happily try new dishes and even get to enjoy them! Food is an important part of the culture and contributes to the overall experience. It is also worth mentioning that, if students plan to attend a UK university for 3 years, it's a good idea to get used to the food in 3 weeks!

## Parental Agreement

Before arrival at Meridian, we require the parents/guardian of U18 students to sign the "Parental Consent" form to confirm that they understand the systems and rules that we have in place for the welfare of U18s and the level of supervision that we provide for them.

## Rules for Under 18s

These rules apply to all students. They cover how to behave in school, on activities and excursions, and with Homestay Providers.

### At School

- Start your class on time.
- At break times - always stay on school grounds.
- Resume class on time after breaks.
- Always eat your lunch in the school.
- You are not allowed to leave the school at any time without supervision - you must be with a member of staff or your host family.
- Don't leave the school with anybody you do not know.
- Always be polite, don't run around in school or make unnecessary noise.
- Always speak to somebody from the Welfare Team (Student Services) if you have a problem or if something is wrong.

### Activities/Excursions

- You need to be ready to leave on time.
- Always listen and take notice of your activity leader - they will give you instructions and guidance on the activity or excursion.
- Make sure you follow your activity leader.
- Make sure you wear appropriate clothing for the activity e.g. footwear, jacket, hat, umbrella, bottle of water, sunscreen etc. Remember to check the weather!
- Always make sure you have your host family's address and telephone number with you.
- Always speak to your Activity Leader if you have a problem or if something is wrong.

### Homestay Provider

- Set your alarm to allow you enough time to get up, have breakfast and get ready to leave for school.
- Be polite and courteous to your hosts and follow the housekeeping rules of the family.

- Observe the curfew times below.
- If you are going to be late, let your host know.
- Always go straight home after school or from your activity or excursion for your evening meal.
- If you are 15 or under you are not allowed to leave the Homestay without responsible adult supervision.
- Always speak to your Homestay if you have a problem or if something is wrong.

### What time must you be home?

- If you are 17 years old: 23.00
- If you are 16 years old: 22.00
- If you are 15 years old or younger you are not permitted to leave the host family home without responsible adult supervision.

### Student's age Under 18 (U18) are not permitted to:

- Drink alcohol
- Take any form of recreational drug or "legal high"
- Visit casino's or nightclubs where the entrance age is 18
- Stay out overnight without prior permission
- Leave the host town
- Sleepover at another hosts without prior approval

### Supervision of Under 18 year Olds

- Meridian will supervise all education and activity programmes. We have a 24 hour emergency contact number should any student have a problem or concern.
- Students may travel between homestay and school unsupervised. We will ensure that they have fully charged mobile phones and they travel in pairs.

### Safeguarding - code of conduct

The safeguarding code of conduct explains how all adults (teachers, group leaders, activity leaders, Homestay Providers etc.) should behave with young learners (U18s).

- Never compromise yourself or put yourself in such a position which could lead to an allegation being made against you.
- Keep all relationships with students strictly professional.

- All staff must demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour to promote the welfare, well-being and safety of U18s and vulnerable persons and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made.
- If you have any concerns about the welfare, care, safety or well-being of an U18, you should report it immediately to reception, your line manager or any manager.
- If you become aware of rumours or speculation regarding an U18 or any suspicious or inappropriate contact or relationship with a member of staff or any other visitor, you must report it immediately.
- If an U18 reports a concern to you, you must report it.
- The safety of U18s is everyone's responsibility. If you see or hear anything of concern you must report it; doing nothing is not an option.
- All staff are to be aware of the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Persons Policy. A copy is available in the staff kitchen, teacher's room, reception and on request.

## Social Programme

- We provide a full programme of afternoon and evening activities Monday to Friday, and full-day guided excursions at weekends. For activities where the meeting point is not given as a school premises, students may need to make their own way to the event unsupervised.
- After all activities, students will make their way home unsupervised. For evening activities, particularly when it is dark, we strongly advise all students under 18 to travel back to their homestay with a friend living nearby.
- Tellus Education Group organises one-day guided excursions at weekends supervised by staff. There may be some time in the programme (2-3 hours) where the students will be unsupervised, for example to go shopping. We require that all students provide the Activity Leader with their mobile phone number and take particular care to ensure that U18s have the mobile phone number of the Activity Leader in case of emergency.
- With regard to students aged 16 and 17 these students are treated as adults and again there will normally be some time (2-3 hours) where the students will be unsupervised, for example to go shopping. Students age 15 and below will be supervised throughout an activity programme.
- If at any time responsibility for the supervision of students out of lessons or scheduled activities is not the responsibility of the school, it is explained in writing to the person making the booking at the time, and a completed booking will be taken as consent.

## Risk assessment

All excursions (trips) are subject to a risk assessment. Here is a checklist for all group and activity

leaders:

- Give students and guides a contact mobile number.
- Give a clear route map.
- Make it clear what train the group is travelling on.
- Count the numbers of students during any breaks in journey and getting on and off the train or coach.
- Take something visible to carry (e.g. green umbrella) and wear the official clothing provided. It makes easier for the group to follow you in the crowded streets.
- Ensure one of you is leading the group and other walks behind, if there is more than one Guide.
- Exchange phone numbers with everyone. Make sure everyone knows when and where you are meeting again. Encourage students to walk in small groups.
- Ensure students know there is a risk of theft. Advise all students to make sure their bags are sealed and ask all students to be vigilant for each other as well.
- Ensure you are aware of fire exits and fire evacuation procedures.
- Consider possible weather conditions and plan appropriate programme, clothing and equipment.
- Plan for students who may not bring suitable clothing. Check before departure and/or bring spares.
- Observe the daily weather forecast and adjust plans if necessary.
- Guides must know how to call emergency services.
- Remind students on medication to bring their medicines.
- Ensure emergency contact numbers are known to all students.
- Avoid busy roads wherever possible.
- Pre-plan the route as much as possible.
- Brief students as much as possible about potential hazards.
- Use designated crossings :

## First Aid

Members of staff in our schools are fully trained in first aid techniques and procedures. They hold a current First Aid Certificate and keep their training up to date. They have access to first aid equipment in the schools and take first aid kits with them on trips and activities. We have policies and procedures in place for all our staff and students to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone, whether on school premises or outside on organised events.

## Hospital Treatment

All activity leaders, guides and responsible adults should follow this procedure if a student needs to be taken to hospital following an accident:

- Apply first aid, if appropriate.
- Call the emergency services on 999.
- Call parents or guardians.
- Accompany the student to hospital.
- Be prepared to stay with the student for as long as it is possible to do so.
- Issue a report detailing the circumstances of why, where and how the accident, injury or illness occurred.
- Send a copy of the report to parents, the school or a third party, as appropriate.
- Inform the host family.
- Take a copy of the parental consent form to the hospital.

## Liability Insurance

Tellus Education Group Ltd has full public liability insurance which covers students should anything happen to them on school premises, for example: death and injury or damage to property or possessions. Tellus Education Group is fully protected for up to £5,000,000 per claim.

## Medical Insurance

NHS Treatment is free of charge for all EU nationals but payment is required for any necessary medicines. Any student from outside the EU will need to have their own medical insurance.

We do not provide medical insurance direct but we can provide contact with an insurance provider. This is not included as part of a programme but can be purchased for an additional cost. Medical expense insurance is strongly recommended.

It is available to anyone under the age of 70 and must be purchased before travel begins. The cover

includes leisure trips within Europe up to a maximum of 21 days per trip.

The insurance cover provides financial protection and medical assistance during the length of stay.

Exact coverage depends upon the individual policy but examples include:

- Personal accident
- Emergency medical treatment
- Emergency dental treatment
- Stay in hospital
- Funeral expenses
- Personal possessions, money and replacement documents
- Luggage delay
- Personal liability

For more details contact: [info@meridianenglish.com](mailto:info@meridianenglish.com)