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EDUCATION
The Global Education Expert

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work with us!**

AMBER
GUARDIANSHIPS
HOST FAMILY HANDBOOK

Amber Host Families

We use host family accommodation for all boarding school students, who may have weekends away from school 'exeat' weekends, termly breaks, or if their flight times do not reflect the opening and closing times of the school. Families are allowed to accommodate friends of the same nationality.

Your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator will advise you further on this when they visit you.

Host Family Statement of Service

Overview:

Amber Education Guardianship would like to welcome you in joining our host family service for our international students. We are a guardianship company which branches out to China and Hong Kong, most of our students are Chinese. In this statement, we would like to outline the service which Amber would be bringing to host families in helping them with our students. The aims of this statement are:

- To outline what is required from the partnership from the host family and Amber education.
- To inform you of the procedures we take to safeguard our students.
- To inform you about what we will do to support our students and host families.
- How Amber guardians will maintain communication with both student and host family.

Amber Education guardianship responsibilities:

The parents have appointed Amber guardians to act as Education guardians for the student on the terms set out in the student care plans (Which are detailed below). During half terms and holidays, students may require a host family to stay with, within their local areas, as the boarding houses are closed. This can be an enriching opportunity for both the host family and the student.

Contact you:

We will keep in touch with you and be available to be contacted by you at all reasonable times. We have provided you with emergency contact details in the Host Family Handbook and we will act promptly and responsibly in the event of an emergency.

Information:

We confirm, and you acknowledge that we have given you:

- Details of the periods the student are scheduled to stay with you in the Student Care Plan and will keep these updated in writing; and
- Details of the relevant payments to be made to you for providing the Host Family Services under this agreement.

We will give you full information about the Student before their arrival, including contact details for his or her Parent(s) and the School, along with their gender and age.

We will inform you in writing (except in the case of urgency or an emergency) when any changes are made to any relevant information as soon as is possible.

Travel:

The student who will require a host family is under 17, therefore should not be travelling alone. If the host family would like to take the student out for activities, they must inform the guardian first, who will inform the parents.

Documents:

We confirm that we have provided you with and you acknowledge that you have received a copy of the Host Family Handbook, the Child Protection Policy and health and safety and any other policies for hosting under 16-year olds where appropriate.

If the Amber guardianship student is under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) living with a host family for more than 28 days, they must adhere to the regulations regarding private fostering. The LA will be informed by the guardian.

The arrangement of the host family:

Amber education will liaise with the school and the host family to ensure that where possible the local authority is notified of the proposal for a private fostering arrangement at least six weeks before the date on which the arrangement is to begin or immediately where the arrangement is to begin within six weeks.

Informing the Local Authority:

We confirm, that where the Student is under 16, and where the stay is planned for more than 28 days, we will inform the LA of the arrangements as soon as these arrangements have been made.

Payment:

We agree to make payments to you in accordance with this agreement, this varies with location within London and outside of London.

Private foster arrangements with the local authority:

Amber education will liaise with the school and host families to explain carefully what is required of them in entering into a private fostering arrangement, this will be explained

during the visiting of the school and the homes. This includes explaining that there will be regular visits and meetings with the local authority.

Amber education has a system in place for recording all correspondence with the local authority private fostering team and securing relevant permissions to share such information as is necessary with the student, parents, host families, and partner schools.

Amber education guardians would perform regular visits to host families due to the understanding that sometimes those who are over the age of 16 would like to extend their stay period within the host family homes. This will ensure the student's welfare and health and safety.

Checks:

Every individual within the host family home who is over the age of 18 will need to have a DBS check. This is to safeguard our students. Also, the guardian will also travel to meet you at home and health and safety inspect the home before any student can live there. ID details will be taken and kept safe with the data protection officer.

Amber guardianship plans:

In accordance with the plans the students' parents have chosen, we will organise host families in relation to the student chosen plan. Students that require a host family are normally under 17 of age.

Hosting Students

Communication & Culture Shock

Your student may be very shy initially and perhaps spend much time in their room. It is vital that the students communicate with the family, so please try to talk to them as much as possible in the early days of their stay; if they feel welcome, they will settle in more easily.

Culture shock is huge for some of our students and they will need help and support in order to gain confidence in the early days of their stay. Sometimes there are so many changes they become confused, which of course can lead to homesickness.

Whilst 'please' and 'thank you' are a day to day custom here, in some languages and cultures these terms do not exist, so it is a question of explaining to some of our students how and when to use these terms. Where these words are not used all of the time, it can make some comments sound quite impolite, so it is vital that you help the student to learn the English customs and way of life.

Communication

Most international students arrive in the UK with a mobile phone, and if they do not have a phone, they buy them as soon as they arrive in the UK.

When your student arrives at your home please speak with them about the use of your home telephone, explain to them that they must ask permission and that they must reimburse you for any calls that they do make. Please do suggest to the student that they make reverse calls home to their parents and that they buy a telephone card to use outside of the family home. Do check that the students have spoken with their parents especially when they arrive, as their parents will nervously be waiting for their call.

Accommodation

Generally, all students have to have their own room, they must not share. The room should be large enough to contain hanging space and a set of drawers, mirror with lighting, a table, a chair, and lamp, as they will have a lot of homework/prep to do, and they generally prefer to do this in their own room, not at the dining room table.

Please ensure that your home is warm enough throughout the winter months, most of the students who register with Amber Guardianships come to study in the UK from countries with hot weather. Those students from cold countries are used to warm homes. Please make sure that the door of your students' room has a lock on it, and please explain to your children, that they are not allowed to enter the students' room at any time, or to touch their possessions unless they have permission from the student first.

If you have other students staying with you from another guardianship at the same time as you have an Amber Guardianships student staying please make sure that you tell your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator.

Please check any electrical equipment your student may bring and help them to buy an adapter plug if they need one.

Bathroom

All students that stay with you must have free use of the bathroom, which must have a lock on the door. Please do explain to the students that you expect them to leave it clean and tidy after they have used it. Please do provide towels for use whilst the student is staying in your home, however, students should provide their own towels for exercises such as swimming.

Can you please ensure that the student has facilities available to them for the disposal of sanitary products such as sanitary towels and tampons, and please identify where this is placed with the student.

Laundry

Amber Guardianships ask that you show the student where to place their washing and that you wash an acceptable amount of clothes for the student during the time that they are staying with you.

Food

Amber Guardianships students expect to eat their meals together with you as a family and to join in the family conversation during this important time. Food in England is becoming more and more multicultural! In general, our students appreciate the following:

A jug of cold water on the table at all mealtimes. Brown bread, as opposed to white bread, is always appreciated, and plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables, and cheese. English gravy is not always popular with international students, so may we suggest that you place it in an individual jug on the table.

Please explain to the students that the first meal after they return from school at the end of the day is dinner. All boarding school students require full board (three meals per day).

Finally, please do have a chat with your students as soon as possible after they arrive and ask them if there are any specific foods that they do not like, but also what their favourite foods are. Please also take this opportunity to explain your family meal times to your student.

Sickness

If a student becomes ill whilst they are staying with you, contact your family doctor. The family doctor will treat the student as a visitor to your home. If a student comes into contact with any contagious illnesses whilst they are staying with you in your home, it is extremely important that you contact your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator before the student returns to school.

Trips

Most international students will be able to enjoy a family day out during their stay with you in your home. If they are 16 or above, they must pay for their part of the trip, we only hold money for students who are under 16 years of age. Any big outing must be agreed to by yourself and your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator prior to the trip taking place.

Peers

Some students do ask their host families if their English friends can visit them whilst they are staying with you. Please talk about this with your students, as we are aware that some families are happy to accommodate their peers, however, not all families feel the same.

Pets

Some cultures are rather surprised to see animals/pets in almost every English home; therefore, it may take some time for the student to become accustomed to this. Please ensure that you tell your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator if you are planning on buying a pet or if you no longer have any animals living with you in your home.

Smoking

Amber Guardianships students are instructed before leaving their home country that they cannot smoke in your home unless this has been agreed before they arrive in the UK. Even under these circumstances, we do ask that they only smoke in pre-designated areas and that they abide by UK law.

Curfew

Curfew can be instructed by the host family, depending on the age of the student it is advised that the student is given a curfew of before 11. If the student chooses to stay away from the host family, the host family must immediately alert the guardian or the project manager. If the student has been authorised by their parents to travel on certain dates, they are living with the host family, the host family will be told by the guardian and they will give the host family details of when they will leave, where they will leave to and what time and date they will be back.

If the student feels homesick, we advise you talk to them and listen. Alert the guardian and they will call the student and make sure they are well and be able to talk to them in their native language, this at times is comforting for the student.

General Housekeeping

When the student arrives at your home, please discuss with them their curfew for every evening- please consider their age when determining an appropriate time. Generally, host families provide their student with a house key, but some families prefer to not do this, of course, this will also depend on the age of your student.

The number of students to be accepted

Several students to be accepted within a host family household depends on the amount of separate private rooms the host family can provide. If the student will be sharing a host family with another student, the parents will be alerted, and they will have to provide authorisation for their child to stay in the same house as another student before their child can move in. If the host family has a room with two separate beds and would like two students to stay, it depends on the parent's authorisation again. Different sex students should not be staying in the same room, they will need separate rooms.

Students Immediate Families

Please do not encourage the students that are staying with you to invite/have their immediate families to stay. This can cause issues, especially when it comes to payment, and we cannot take any responsibility if this situation were to occur. However, please do recommend local accommodation that is within their budget.

Number of students to be accommodated

Keeping the students safe and in a happy environment is our aim at Amber, we also promote healthy living and positive behaviour. When deciding upon the number of

students you can host for in your house, please keep in mind that all students should be provided with a bed of their own, area where they can study, and access to a well looked after house with easily accessible facilities. If your house does not provide this kind of positive living environments for our international students, we would advise reducing the number of students you are hosting or make sure that the environment you are allowing the students to stay in is suitable for a proactive and comfortable living.

Student being alone

It is the legal requirement for students under the age of 17 years to be accompanied by an adult. It is seen as dangerous if the student is left alone in a house by themselves. As student safety is our priority, the student should not be left alone under the age of 17, and if left alone for any reason. Please contact the guardian so they are aware of the situation.

Insurance

Please make sure that you advise your insurance company that you will be hosting an international student in your home as this may form part of the conditions of your insurance policy. Any breakages or damages that are made must be claimed through your existing insurance company.

Additional car insurance

When using your car to take the student to other locations, you must be aware of additional car insurance encase of emergencies injuries to the student or yourselves. This will help make sure you are protected and the student.

No other paying guests/ B&B arrangements

Host families must be aware that rent paying guests are not allowed to stay alongside the students. As the guests are not family members who do not have DBS checks, this is purely for the safety of our international students.

Changes to arrangements

The host family must alert the guardian if there are any changes to the already signed agreement. This will then be discussed with the host family and the student will be relocated.

Computers/Internet

Most families have computers in their homes nowadays, and some will give their student permission to use them. We do ask that you discuss with your students the rules regarding using the computer and what they can and cannot do.

Please ensure that you have sufficient filtering/protection on your computer to prevent unwanted material being viewed or downloaded. We cannot pay out for costs relating to this; any damage must be claimed via your own insurance company.

The student may bring their own computer or laptop. If they do this, please can you ask the other family members not to use it.

We accept that if the student's activity increases the internet usage beyond the limit set by your Internet Service Provider, then the student will be liable to pay any additional charges for the additional bandwidth that they have used. If this does happen, then we will need for you to provide evidence, this will usually be available from your user portal which is given to you by your internet service provider in order for you to monitor your internet usage and manage your account. This will show the amount that has been used over the period of time that the student was staying with you and the usage from previous months. This will be clear evidence of the surge in usage during the course of their stay. In addition, it will also provide a printed copy of the Internet Service Provider's charges.

Pocket Money

Students of 16 years and above will be responsible for their own pocket money. We will not take responsibility for these student's pocket money. Please do not lend or borrow any money from your students under any circumstances. If you feel that there are financial issues, please contact your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator.

Students Finances

Most international students choose to open a bank account when they arrive in the UK. Please, help them to do this; it is extremely useful for overseas parents to be able to transfer money to their children easily when they are in the UK.

Payments and Finances

We are sometimes unable to give you a specific date of departure for the students until nearer the time, as this will be dependent on other factors within their school. We pay host families only up to the point of departure, which we will advise you on as soon as that information becomes available to us.

Payment to Families

Payment is made by our Head Office at the end of the students stay. If you take a student on a day trip, we will pay their entrance fees and any extra costs within reason. Please contact your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator for additional information and guidance.

Finances

Please do not discuss finances with your student as this can sometimes lead to problems and misunderstandings. All finances must remain between yourself and Amber Guardianships via your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator.

Family Payment Rates

Please find below the weekly/nightly payment rates for hosting Amber Guardianship students. If you have any questions regarding this then please either contact your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator:

Scotland, London zone 1-9: £55 per night

All other areas: £45 per night

Termination of contract

If the host family chooses to terminate the contract with Amber education, they would need to send a written email or letter to the Guardian explaining why they would like to terminate. The host family will have to give Amber guardians one month to terminate the contract and within the one month, if opted out the host family's records will be deleted off the database.

Travel Arrangements

Arrival of Students

Your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator will be given an estimated time of arrival for your students and will keep you informed of more accurate times on the day that the students are due to arrive in the UK.

Amber Guardianships does expect for either a family member or preferably the entire family to greet the student when they arrive at your home; they can be nervous and tired. Please always offer them food and drink regardless of when they arrive, as they are usually hungry and thirsty after travelling.

Travelling to/from School

Students are responsible for their own travel costs when travelling to/from school. The Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator will help them too purchase bus passes, train tickets or inquire with the school as to whether there is school transport available.

Please do not transport your student around in your own car and ask to be reimbursed afterward, however, if you are travelling in the same direction, it would be very good of you if you were to offer them a free lift.

Transport

We need permission from the students' parents for students to either take driving lessons or ride a bike; there is a significant element of risk as many of the students will be used to using the other side of the road. Please ask your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator to contact the UK office and we will then seek written parental consent.

Amber International Students

Student Handbook

All our guardianship students are given a handbook that outlines all of the points that we have detailed in the host family handbook. They are expected to socialise and live with you as a family, keep their room clean, make their own bed, help with the dishes and the clearing of the table after family meals. This all makes way for a good relationship between you as the host family and the student that is living with you.

Boarding, and day school students

Boarding students regularly would only need a host family during the half terms and holidays when the boarding house they stay in most of the academic year, is closed. The day school students may require staying for a full academic year, this may mean that they might go back during the holidays. But any student who is staying for more than 28 days, the local authorities will be alerted so that they can also monitor the wellbeing of the student and keep in regular contact with the school.

Host families must also consider when it would be acceptable to leave a student unattended within the household. Putting the health and safety of the student first.

The standard expected of a host family will be checked upon the first face to face meeting with the guardian. The accommodation will have to include a separate private room, facilities within the room, including a space to study, access to a bathroom. All Amber education host families are full board, this requires the student to receive breakfast, lunch and dinner and access to the kitchen. The access to communal places around the house such as the laundry room and computers with WIFI.

The student code of conduct

At Amber Education, we make sure to instruct the students on mannerisms of English culture, and the kind of behaviour they should have when being a guest at someone else's home. We also outline the safeties of living with a host family, for example knowing what to do when it comes to fire safety, cleanliness, travelling around, visitors and manners. This is all displayed in the student welcome pack. If you would like to have a read over the code of conduct, please visit the Amber UK website. Contacts are put in place for when a student feels that they are uncomfortable or need help. The guardian is the first line of contact, Amber believes that the importance of speaking up and expressing feelings is important for our students. Therefore, we encourage them to speak to our host families about any problems or talk to our guardians.

Amber Guardianships Area Coordinators/Co-ordinator Administrator

All of our Area Coordinators/Coordinator Administrators are carefully selected by us. You will have met your Area Coordinator when he/she carried out a home visit, but please do contact them if you have a question or a problem- they are here to help you! Something that you may consider to be a minor problem could transform into a larger problem quickly, however, it could easily solve with their help! We do say that you can call them at any time, however, please bear in mind that they have families and therefore, please do try to contact them during office hours as much as possible if it is not an emergency.

In loco parentis

If by any emergency situation occur with the Amber guardianship student, it is the legal requirement of the UK Guardian (loco parentis) to act in place of the parents abroad. Host families are required to share any health information, whether that be medical or mental health with the guardian. If there was a complaint to be made please follow the protocol of Amber education complaint policy and fill out the form attached in Appendix B.

Upcoming Inspection

As part of Amber education Host families, we aim to provide you with happy, lovely, well-mannered students who are willing to experience new cultures. This would require inspections of your home, from Amber guardianship, the schools, and AEGIS. In doing so, the inspections will broaden your host family status and schools and AEGIS will recognise that your home is able to host students. Please find the inspection consent form in Appendix A.

Importance of Annual training

At Amber education, we treasure the importance of training our employees and keeping them up to date with the recent government policies. Our host families are therefore given the opportunity to train with our guardians annually. The training will include: safeguarding children, complaints, health and safety, fire safety, and data protection of our students and host family.

Amber Policies

Amber list of policies can be accessed on the Amber UK website:

<http://www.amberedu.co.uk/>

When you have time, please review the policies. If there are any questions about the information, please contact marketing@amberedu.co.uk or alex.leung@amberedu.co.uk

List of policies

- Data protection- GDPR
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Confidentiality and information
- Missing student
- Bullying & cyber bullying – E safety
- Student handbook
- Parent handbook
- Complaints policy – Complaints form is Appendix B
- Anti- radicalisation
- Prevent Duty

Our Thanks

Amber Guardianships would like to take this opportunity to thank you for hosting Amber Guardianships students. Alongside, our Head Office in Hong Kong we do try to prepare our students as much as possible before they arrive for their stay in the UK, this way we can try to ensure that each student and family has a happy experience and we do hope that eventually a friendship may form between both families. The host family is a vital part of this and we hope this pack will answer any questions that you may have regarding hosting our students.

- We will also like to remind you that regular checks from Amber guardians and AEGIS will occur at least once a year.
- In an event of an emergency please contact Winggee Siu or Tiffany Li. And they will guide you to what to do next.

Here are the emergency contact details of both our London Amber guardians:

Winggee Siu:

Email: Winggee.siu@amberedu.co.uk

Mobile: 07487225711

Appendix A

If you give consent to further inspections being held by either the school or AEGIS, at your home please sign your information below. These inspections will be similar to the inspections carried out with Amber education and will act as a confirmation that the requirements to be a safe environment for students to live is being met.

Host Name: _____ Date: _____

Host family Signatures: _____

Address: _____

Dates of availability for inspection: _____

Amber information about student:

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____

School attending: _____

Guardian Signature: _____

Appendix B

To be completed by a member of staff / host family

Remember:

- ask "open" questions and not leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer
- listen carefully and keep an open mind
- do not take a decision as to whether or not the alleged abuse or neglect has taken place.

Reporting form

Please complete in black pen	
Date	
Time	
Place	
Member of staff present and position	
Full name of student(s)	
Before proceeding have you reassured the student that you are there to help them but you cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality? Have you explained that in some cases you may be able to keep it a secret, but that you may need to pass the information on to the Designated Person [• name] and / or [• job title] [• name] who will ensure the correct action is taken?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Ask the student to explain their concern or allegation and record details of the matter in the space below. Use a separate sheet if necessary and then attach to the form.	

A non-exhaustive list of the details to be included:

- what was said or done, by whom, to whom and in whose presence
- when the incident took place and where
- whether the student wishes their parents [or legal guardian] to be informed.

Any additional comments or evidence

Details may include, for example, any concerns you may have about signs of abuse, emotional ill-treatment or neglect.

Please also include a note of any other evidence, for example, written notes, items of clothing or mobile phone messages relating to the matter.

Any suspicion or complaint of abuse must be reported to the Designated Person [• name] or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Person [• name], or if the complaint involves a member of staff or host family, to the Manager of the Guardianship Organisation.

DO NOT investigate the matter, as this could prejudice the investigations of outside agencies.

Where the concern or allegation is made against the DP or the Deputy DP, you must immediately inform the Manager of the Guardianship Organisation, without first notifying them.

Please record what action you have taken and when

Full name of member of staff / host family

Signature