



Amber Guardianships

Thank you for hosting our Students!

Host Family Handbook 2026-2027

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Welcome and Introduction

This handbook is designed to be a guide on what you can expect when hosting overseas students and what is expected of you as a host family.

As an Amber Guardianships host family, you are providing a very important service to our clients. As well as representing Amber, you will play a large part in ensuring the students have an enjoyable time in the UK, in a safe and supportive environment.

You will be visited by one of our staff, who will be looking for warm, comfortable, safe and hygienic conditions conducive to study and relaxation. Your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator will advise you further on this when they visit you.

We rely on your continued support to enable us to deliver (and continue delivering) a high level of service - you are an essential partner and we very much appreciate your input. The role of a host family and relationship with students can be a delicate one on both sides with a responsibility on both parties to understand and respect some cultural differences.

As an AEGIS-accredited Guardianship Organisation, Amber Guardianships has proudly held AEGIS Gold Standard accreditation since 2022. We are committed to following AEGIS (The Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students) standards to maintain the highest levels of safeguarding, welfare, and care for our students. We expect all host families to uphold these standards and follow the guidance set out in this handbook.

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.

In accordance with the plans the students' parents have chosen, we will organise host families in relation to the student chosen plan.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding anything mentioned below, please get in touch with us.

Amber Guardianships

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About Amber Guardianships

Amber Education (HK) Services Ltd. is a company based in Hong Kong with a focus exclusively on the British and Chinese education markets which has one office in London, 3 offices in Hong Kong and 7 offices in Mainland China.

Founded in 1989, Amber Education (HK) Ltd. has developed rapidly to become the largest provider in recruiting educational students to UK Universities. Our company also has close connections with hundreds of higher education institutions, spanning the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Switzerland.

Amber Education (HK) Services Ltd established Amber Education Services (UK) Ltd in 2015. In May next year, we launched Amber Guardianships - a guardianship service that is designed to cater for the students that our Hong Kong and China offices send to UK boarding schools every year.

Adhering to the principle of providing a professional, tailored service to schools and parents, and following the AEGIS Code of Practice, Amber Guardianships' highest priority is to safeguard the welfare of the children we work with. We provide 24 hours, seven days a week service that offers a high level of support to students, parents, schools and host families. Our aim is to ensure students obtain the best academic results in our care whilst supporting them with a secure and caring environment during their stay in the UK.

Amber Guardianships' UK multilingual team is ready to explain every detail of our services to parents in their language.

1. Your Responsibilities

During the times that you are hosting, your responsibilities are to protect, care for and provide food and lodging for your student on a day-to-day basis and to exercise the same levels of care as a responsible parent – in loco parentis.

The overall guardianship responsibility remains with Amber Guardianships, whom you should contact whenever a situation arises in which you are uncertain as to the appropriate action to take. Untoward occurrences, such as hospitalisation, unexplained student absences or other situations affecting student safety, should be reported to Amber Guardianships immediately.

1.1 Host Family Check

1.1.1. Amber Guardianships Direct Homestay

1.1.1.1 Security Check

• Enhanced DBS check: Amber Guardianships will do Safeguarding checks before placing a student in the host family. We need to facilitate several checks on the people normally in your household. Anyone aged 16 years or older who normally lives in your home needs to have an Enhanced DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) check facilitated and paid for by Amber Guardianships to comply with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006. This includes anyone who would have regular contact with our students whilst they are staying with you. DBS checks are reviewed regularly in line with safeguarding requirements and any changes in household circumstances must be reported immediately (a new member of your family moves in, a householder is no longer employed, a new baby arrives and building work in your house therefore you do not have available room) within that time frame you must inform us.

It is not possible to host any other paying guests or run a Bed & Breakfast facility whilst looking after Amber Guardianships' students.

• Settled Status/British Citizens: we need to collect information from the primary carer to verify their identity, this should preferably be by the passport or if not the birth certificate. You should permit us for a copy of this document to be retained by Amber Guardianships for our records. Amber Guardianship ensures that the homestay has settled status or British citizens and records the date that this check took place.

• Two references: Amber Guardianships will request and follow up on 2 written references from people who have known the primary carer in the host family for at least 2 years; this further supports our safeguarding principles.

Other documents:

We also need your permission to have a copy of the following documents retained by Amber Guardianships and record the date this check took place. ID details will be taken and kept safe with the data protection officer.

- Safeguarding and Child Protection training certificate Level One
- Landlord Gas Safety Certificate
- Insurance certificate(s)

1.1.1.2. Host Family Profile and Contact

We ask all members of the host family to complete a self-declaration form and ask you to provide details about all members of your household who may be present when students are staying with you. We then collate these details to produce a short profile with photographs of the host family which we send out in advance to students and parents.

Amber will provide a short profile including the photo of the homestay host which will be sent to students and parents. We will also send the main contact details to the parents and local guardian/area coordinator in case of emergency.

1.1.1.3 Formal Agreement

All host families working with Amber Guardianships will be provided with a Host Family Contract. If a host family decides to terminate their work or Amber Guardianships wish to terminate the agreement, details of the processes can be found in the contract.

1.1.1.4 Medical Declaration

All members of the homestay to complete a signed medical declaration form.

1.1.1.5 Health & Safety Assessment

Before placing our students with homestays, Amber Guardianships carries out initial Health & Safety checks on your property:

- Minimum of one smoke alarm per storey
- Carbon monoxide alarm in any room containing a gas, liquid or solid fuel burning appliance
- Landlord gas safety check: annual landlord gas safety check undertaken by a Gas Safe registered engineer
- Safe electrical systems
- Accessible routes out of the house in case of a fire
- Fire-fighting equipment, if provided, is suitably serviced
- Fire guards in use when open fires are lit
- Matches & lighters are safely stored
- Basic First Aid kit is available
- Safe storage of any prescription medication
- Appropriate storage of alcohol
- Awareness of basic food hygiene for meal preparation
- Safe storage of food
- It is essential that you advise your insurance company that you will be having a student living in your home as this may affect your policy. Breakages and damage caused by the student, must be claimed from your insurance company.
- If CCTV is present, written proof that Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) guidelines have been followed

1.1.1.6 Vehicle Checks

Some of our host families are willing to collect and return students to their school at the beginning and end of their stay and we encourage you to do this if it's practical. Similarly, you may wish to transport your student to and from the airport at the start and end of the school holidays. Please let us know if this is the case. If not, we arrange for your students to be transported using one of our

drivers or a taxi. If you are using your car to transport students, even if only during their stay with you, you need to provide Amber Guardianships with a copy of your fully comprehensive car insurance, prove that you have informed your insurance providers that you are using the car for business purposes, and a copy of your current MOT certificate if applicable.

1.1.1.7 Risk Assessment, Visit and Record

Amber Guardianships conduct an initial Health & Safety check on your property during an assessment visit/video call to each Homestay before placing any students within the household. During this visit, suitable health and safety checks must be conducted and a simple risk assessment of the property undertaken along with a check on the suitability of the accommodation.

The DSL and Deputy DSL of Amber Guardianships will be in charge of the health and safety assessment checks and provide adequate advice.

The visit is recorded within the Homestay File.

Amber Guardianships accident book will record events involving students and homestays.

Amber Guardianships will revisit each host family once a year to offer support and to recheck the points above at a mutually convenient time. Suitable notice will always be given.

The written record of this work will be stored in Amber office UK, only accessed by the Data Protection Officer, and also kept in a secured network and securely shared by Guardian Manager.

1.1.2 Host family from a Third-Party Host Provider

As our guardianship students are spread around the UK, Amber Guardianships use host family providers. Following appropriate due diligence, we appoint reputable third-party providers and put in place any additional arrangements required.

- In order to ask the third-party homestay provider to release the details of the homestay to Amber Guardianships, they have to assign the family to the student first. Amber Guardianships will obtain the host family profile, a description and pictures of the house, including bedroom, living room, bathroom, study space, pets, etc.) and the postcode.
- On receipt of the homestay details, Amber Guardianships coordinator then assesses the area where the family is based, visits in person if the homestay is nearby if necessary, alternatively Safeguarding Lead would conduct a video call (recorded visit report if the homestay permits to do so). During this visit/call, which may take an hour, Amber Guardianships will ask the host provider or host to show us the enhanced DBS and passport in order to prove that they are suitable to work with students and have the right settled status in the UK. We may also conduct a healthy and safety assessment as listed in 1.1.1.5 and 1.1.1.6 (if transporting students), ask to see the student's room and bathroom arrangements etc.
- As the homestay arrangement is through a third party, Amber Guardianships does not have a homestay contract. Both Amber Guardianships and contracted third-party providers work together to ensure appropriate safeguarding and accommodation arrangements are in place.
- Due to GDPR, references for the homestay main carer are not available to us. Some homestay might be willing to give us reference, and we will request for reference and record.
- The Host Provider confirms the Amber Guardianships declaration form in order to confirm that there is a contract in place between the homestay and the provider, and that satisfactory references have been received.
- Where Amber Guardianships conduct interviews with the homestays, we may check with the provider/ main carer that there is a contract in place, that they have provided enhanced DBS,

Passport, referees Landlord Gas Safety Certificate and insurance details to the homestay provider and that the company has carried out the checks as it claims to do.

1.1.3. Safeguarding

Amber Guardianships is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of our students and we expect all our staff, host families and working partners to share this commitment. We have the following policies and documents in place to safeguard our students and hosts.

Our safeguarding Lead will go through the company policies and related documents with the host during the home visit. All policies will be updated annually and we will email the host with the updated information.

Hosts should have Safeguarding training Level one (online training course is accepted) and have a certificate to prove the date of taking the course. All hosts must complete safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role, supported by annual safeguarding updates and refresher training. Amber Guardianships updates the record annually.

Documents include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Prevent/Anti-Radicalisation Policy
- Missing Student Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy
- Online Safety, cyberbullying, and sharing nude/semi-nude images guidance
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Emergency Contingency Policy
- Low Level Concerns
- Allegations against adults/staff

Amber Guardianships policies and handbooks include a publication and review date and are updated annually. <https://www.amberedu.co.uk/guardianshippolicy>. Our Staff and Homestay Code of Conduct, please refer to P.31 of this document.

Reference: *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*

1.1.4. Information about the Host Family

Amber will gather full details on all homestay members, either permanently resident or temporarily living away from home. These details will include the following:

- Full Names
- Date of Birth

- Sex
- Occupation
- Interests and hobbies
- Religion (if applicable)
- Smoker/non-smoker, if so, inside/outside the property
- Any dietary patterns followed by members of the homestay if they will affect the student
- any other regular visitors to the household, such as extended family members and visitors, and to record if they stay overnight with the homestay or not.
- Amber will carry out the same security checks on any regular overnight visitors. They will be seen as part of the family member, and enhanced DBS and other security checks will be conducted.
- gather information from the homestay about any pets or animals kept by the homestay.

1.2 What does Amber Guardianships expect from the host

We expect our host families to provide a safe and welcoming environment to the student, support and make the student feel like part of the family, please:

- Have an understanding of the needs of overseas students in the UK.
- Have a knowledge of the UK independent education.
- Have a genuine interest in the progress and welfare of the student.
- Have the proper accommodation for the student including their own comfortable, clean, separate and private room.
- Look after and respect the rights of the student.
- Help with travel and transport.
- Allow access to all communal areas of the home.
- Provide meals and accommodate any dietary needs.
- Respect the student's different cultural and religious background and be sensitive to their needs.
- Treat the student as a member of the family rather than as a paying guest.
- Encourage the student to speak English as much as possible in the home.
- Speak clearly, slowly and be patient giving plenty of opportunities for conversation.

In a nutshell, the host family is exercising the same level of care as responsible parents, accepting responsibility for the day-to-day care of the student.

1.3 Code of Conduct when hosting a student (Please refer to Appendix 2 for full details)

- Corporal punishment is illegal and must never be used. If there is any form of physical restraint, homestays must contact Amber Guardianships immediately to explain the situation. Only reasonable, appropriate and lawful means of control to maintain safety may be used.
- Hosts should always be appropriately dressed. They should be supportive and fair to all students, use appropriate language and show patience and understanding when dealing with all students/guests.

- Hosts should always be present overnight and normally present when students under 18 are at home. Under-18s should not be left unsupervised overnight. Students will not be left at home alone regardless of their age if they do not feel comfortable with this.
- Hosts must maintain clear professional boundaries with students at all times, including appropriate use of social media, messaging applications, photography and physical contact.
- Hosts need to ensure that any entertainment shown in their house is age appropriate and not harmful in any way, so as not to cause any offence. This includes TV shows, movies, music and get-togethers or parties.
- Although it is self-evident, hosts and members of their household SHOULD NEVER engage in sexual activity or any kind of inappropriate touching with students under 18. According to the Sexual Offences Act 2003 any person in a Position of Trust engaged in sexual activity of any sort with students under the age of 18 is breaking the law. Any incidents will be immediately reported to the police and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- If CCTV is present, any CCTV must comply with current UK data protection legislation and must never be installed in bedrooms, bathrooms or other private areas used by students.

2. Arrival of Students

Amber Guardianships Area Coordinator/Coordinator will give an estimated time of the student's arrival and will keep you informed of more accurate times two days before the students are due to arrive in the UK.

Amber will:

- Make a courtesy phone call a few days before to tell you the student's arrival time.
- Have respect for the family home and the house rules the family might have.
- Keep the host family informed.

Amber Guardianships do 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 long travelling.

2.1 Induction to Student

When the students arrive, please take time to explain to them how the home 'works' including laundry routines, mealtimes, basic house rules and the curfew times. Please consider their age, the language appropriate to their age and determine an appropriate time.

Please could you give your students information about the following soon after their arrival:

- Make sure they know the number 999 is for emergency services.
- Make sure that the host and the student exchange their UK mobile phone number.
- Make sure you and the student have Amber Guardianships 24-hour emergency number.

·Give the students information about fire and health safety, personal safety, particularly safety at night in your area and the areas to avoid. General information about getting home safely at night and road safety on their first day is available in their student folders.

·Make sure the student knows her/his way to and from school.

· Inform the students if the house has any specific features that might be hazardous for them (example: balconies, tricky stairs, etc.).

2.2. Accommodation

2.2.1 Bedroom

Each student will have their own bedroom. Parental permission will need to be sought for any student that shares a bedroom. The bedroom needs to be nicely furnished and decorated with sufficient natural light and, as a minimum, a bed, suitable storage and hanging space for clothes, desk, chair, lamp and mirror. Your student will also need to feel comfortable using the other communal areas in the house – kitchen, sitting room etc but they are not permitted access to the other bedrooms in your house, your en-suite bathrooms or your office/ study area.

Clean bedding, towels and basic toiletries should be provided.

The Host family should ensure that:

- Whilst students of the opposite sex may be accommodated with the same homestay, sensible precautions should be taken if hosting students of the opposite sex, such as separating with rooms on different floors. Hosts should ensure that students have privacy. Amber will also inform parents of this arrangement and have their consent.
- AEGIS guidelines suggest no more than three students are placed within the same homestay at any one time. If we are not aware of any others you have booked in, please inform us immediately. If you have other students staying with you from another guardianship organisation at the same time as you have an Amber Guardianships student, please make sure that you tell your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator.
- Amber will ensure that when students under the age of 16 are in the care of a homestay, no students over the age of 20 are being hosted either by Amber or another guardianship organisation within the same homestay.
- Amber also ensures that homestay families do not host any other paying guests or operate any form of bed and breakfast facility when hosting our students.

2.2.2 Privacy

- The student is entitled to exclusive use of their bedroom at the homestay accommodation and access for the host family is not normally permitted, unless previously agreed by the student or for the purposes of cleaning the room or changing the bed linen.
- Please make sure that the door of your student's room has a lock on it if possible, and please explain to your children that they are not allowed to enter the student's room at any time, or to touch their possessions unless they have permission from the student first.
- Please inform the student of any guidelines you may have to ensure privacy for the student and members of your family.

2.2.3 Heating and lighting

The temperature in the house should be maintained at a warm, comfortable level. It should be borne in mind that many students come from warmer climates and may feel cold in temperatures acceptable to people who live here. A higher level of heating than is normally needed for a bedroom may be required. Suitable lighting will be required for the student in the room which will be used for study purposes.

2.2.4. Bathroom

All students that stay with you must have free use of the bathroom, which must have a lock on the door. Please 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 exercise such as swimming.

Most students are used to taking daily showers. Discuss suitable times for them to use the bathroom, and make sure your student knows how to use the shower (e.g. keeping the shower curtain inside!), toilet facilities, and where to put any rubbish.

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 to the student.

2.2.5 Laundry

We expect you to do the student's laundry for them unless they are older and keen to use the laundry facilities themselves and you're happy with that arrangement. Some students might not like having their underwear washed for them and will prefer to do that themselves.

2.2.6. 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. All boarding school students require full boarding (three meals per day).

Please talk to your host student of any food allergies and in some cases, of dislikes. We suggest that you speak to the student on their arrival about mealtimes and the types of food, as well as the host family member's dietary pattern if they will affect the student.

- Breakfast - At school, a cooked breakfast will be available daily, so the offer by a host of an egg and/or bacon (perhaps a bacon sandwich) and or baked beans is usually appreciated. As an alternative, offer some combination of fruit, yogurt, cereal, toast and muffins.
- Lunch - At school, lunch is the main meal of the day. That said, for most UK households, lunch is a lighter meal. A compromise between these two is for a lunch such as jacket potato with cheese, pizza with salad, BLT, pasta with sauce, hotdogs or soup and bread. When a sandwich is offered, it should have plenty of fillings with perhaps salad and crisps on the side. Fruit, cake or something sweet should also be available for dessert.
- Dinner - Dinner should ideally be taken with the family, and consist of at least two courses, e.g. a main course of chicken, fish or red meat with vegetables and a dessert. Popular main courses would include roast chicken with potato and vegetables, pork in a jar of Chinese-style sauce with rice or pasta, stir-fried vegetables with noodles and prawns, lasagne with salad and garlic bread, fish fillets with chips and peas, bangers and mash with vegetables or a BBQ. Dessert might be a fruit pie or crumble, fresh fruit salad and ice cream, choc-ices, cake or jam doughnuts with custard.

- Snacks - Students should feel comfortable asking for snacks and drinks between meals, and reasonable refreshments should be available. If hungry (teenagers are often growing fast!), something like a biscuit or cake or some fruit should be available. A hot drink and a biscuit before going to bed would be appreciated, especially if the dinner is early.
- Sometimes, the student's table manners cause a little concern. Remember, for some of them, they have only just become accustomed to using a knife and fork (they may have only used chopsticks before). Please respect this difficulty and we would also ask you to appreciate that students may have different cultural customs and dining etiquette. Hosts should offer guidance sensitively and respectfully where appropriate. Talking with mouth full etc. is broadly common and acceptable in China, but at the same time try to offer some sensitive guidance if you feel it is necessary. The Student Handbook explains some typical British customs and manners including not leaving the table until everyone has finished and helping to carry the plates to the kitchen at the end of the meal.
- Please remember to discuss meal times with the student on arrival so they know what time they need to be home/available. Students are told to give at least one day's notice if they wish to miss a meal and eat elsewhere.
- Please explain to the students that the first meal after they return from school at the end of the day is dinner.

2.2.7. Keys

All students aged 18 years and over must be provided with their own keys to allow them free access to the homestay at any given time. It is at the discretion of the host family to provide keys to under 18s, but if a key is not given, hosts should make sure that they are at home for when the student would reasonably arrive home after their lessons for the day or agree a time that someone will be home. In addition, Amber cannot accept liability for any charges incurred by the homestay family, for replacing keys or changing door locks, if the student loses, or fails to return keys on their departure. It is the responsibility of the homestay family making arrangements with the student for the safe return of the house key before their departure.

2.3 Curfew

Curfew can be determined by the host family, depending on the age of the student.

If your student goes out, you should always know their plans, return time and exchange telephone numbers. Students are told to always contact their hosts if there is a change to plans.

Amber has guidelines on times that students need to be home by.

- 15 and under: Must be accompanied by an adult member of the host family.
- 16 and 17: Must be home by 10pm at the latest.
- 18 and over: Must be home by 11pm at the latest.

2.4 Students Staying Away

If the student chooses to stay away from the host family, the host family must immediately alert the guardian. Staying away overnight is forbidden unless specific permission has been given in advance by Amber, normally with the consent of the student's parents, provided with the information of the new home address the student stays in, and the adult (over 25-year-old) who will safeguard the student.

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.

Friends of students are not allowed to stay with you unless Amber has approved temporary guardianship in advance. This is for legal and insurance reasons.

2.5 Staying home alone

Students 14 years of age or younger should not be left alone at home. However, if you are just going out for a short time, they can be left in the company of another member of your household who is 16 or over. If comfortable with it, students aged 15 or 16 may be left alone for short periods of time but must know how to contact you in an emergency. Students 17 years or older may be left alone for longer periods but, again, must be able to contact you if necessary. No students should be left alone in the house overnight.

2.6 Going out and travelling

Depending upon the age of your student and where you live, he/she may want to go out independently whilst staying with you. There are a few points to consider when deciding whether this is appropriate or not such as the age of the child, maturity, knowledge of the locality, going alone or with someone and distance away.

Our guidelines are that students under 14 years old should not go out alone, whilst 15 and 16-year-olds are permitted to go out for short periods of time to specific places locally at appropriate time. Students of the age 17 and 18 are more independent but should always be back with you by 10pm.

Travel arrangements for students under 16 are individually risk assessed and approved by Amber Guardianships and parents where appropriate.

Students under the age of 16 wishing to travel must be accompanied by an adult over the age of 25. We will require photographic evidence of ID and written parental permission.

If a student over the age of 16 wishes to travel, they will need written permission from the parents.

Whenever students go out, they must take their fully charged mobile phone, keep their Amber Guardianships contact card on them, store important contacts on their phone, have access to money if needed and inform you of their plans including where they are going, how they are travelling, who they are going with or meeting up with and what time they intend to return. In other words, we expect them to keep you fully informed of their plans, just like your own child of that age would. It is important to note that, as a rule, Use of public transport is risk assessed according to the student's age, maturity, journey and safeguarding considerations.

If the student is staying away overnight, we must have the address of where they are staying, the ID of the responsible adult, the consent letter from the parents, and contact phone number. Students

are not allowed to stay in hostels or hostels overnight unless accompanied by an adult over the age of 25 of the same gender. We will require photographic evidence of ID and written parental permission.

Students are not allowed to stay in college or university halls of residence.

2.7 Staying away overnight

Occasionally your student may ask to go and stay with friends overnight and this type of request often comes at the last minute. They are not permitted to do so unless the visit is sanctioned by Amber Guardianships and by their own parents. You would need to contact Amber Guardianships Coordinator and we would seek permission to ensure that we comply with UKVI (UK Visa & Immigration service) requirements. If, as a host family, you wish to stay away overnight taking your student with you then, again, you must seek permission from Amber Guardianships. Whilst this can often be a great experience for the student, it can have implications upon safeguarding as well as UKVI which are tricky to resolve. We appreciate that the students staying with you are all individuals with varying degrees of maturity, so whilst we give you guidance to help and support you in this handbook, we are happy for you to make personal judgements based on your own instincts. You can always contact Amber Guardianships for advice.

2.8 Transport

- Students are responsible for their own travel costs when travelling to/from school. The Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator will help them to purchase bus passes, train tickets or enquire with the school as to whether there is school transport available.
- Transporting Students: If hosts are likely to transport students in their car, you must provide Amber Guardianships with your full driving licence and comprehensive car insurance, prove that you have informed your insurance providers that you are using the car for business purposes.
- If the host family would like to take the student out for activity, they must inform the guardian first, who will inform the parents.
- Smoking in the car is forbidden.
- If transporting younger students, host families should be aware of the law regarding the use of car seats. The law requires all children travelling in the front or rear seat of any car, van or goods vehicle must use the correct child car seat until they are either 135 cm in height or 12 years old (whichever they reach first). After this they must use an adult seat belt. There are very few exceptions. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that children under the age of 14 years are restrained correctly in accordance with the law.

2.9 Driving Lessons

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 in the UK as we drive on the left. Please ask your Area Coordinator to contact the UK office and we will then seek written parental consent.

2.10 Use of phone

Most international students arrive in the UK with a mobile phone, and if they do not have one, they are advised to buy a phone 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. Do check that the students have spoken with their parents especially when they arrive, as their parents will nervously be waiting for their call.

2.11 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 from 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.
-

2.12 Bank Account

Most international students will open a bank account when they arrive in the UK. Please help them to do this if you feel comfortable for them to use your address; it is extremely useful for overseas parents to be able to transfer money to their children easily when they are in the UK. Alternatively, the school might help them to open an account in the UK or with their parents in their home country.

2.13 Students Immediate Families

Please do not allow 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. Please do recommend local accommodation that is within their budget.

2.14 Pets

Although we love our pets, this is often not shared by people from China and the Far East. Sometimes the students have had very little contact with any dogs or cats and consider them unhygienic and frightening. Please be sensitive to this, particularly when the student first arrives. They often leave loving pets as much as we do!

Please ensure that you tell your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator if you have a pet at home. We will place students with animal allergies with a non-pet owner.

2.15 Smoking/ Vaping

Amber Guardianships students are instructed before leaving their home country that they cannot smoke in the host family.

Students have the right to opt for a non-smoking and no-pet homestay environment.

3. Caring for the Student

3.1 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 contracts 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.

3.2 Distress and Homesickness

It is normal for students to miss their family and home during their first weeks in the UK. The weather, food and language will feel very different, and it may take them some time to settle. 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.

Some students may experience significant cultural adjustment challenges when arriving in the UK, 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 and distress.

A supportive response will be to:

- Invite the child to explore their feelings.
- Encourage the child to express their emotions.
- Help the child understand the situation that triggered the feelings.
- Support the child to improve the situation.

Whilst 'please' and 'thank you' are a daily 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. It is vital that you help the student to learn the English customs and way of life.

It may also help them to keep busy, encourage them to join clubs and take part in school activities. Please include the student in your family activities and if they are finding things difficult talk to them or the guardian.

Remember that most students will have a time when they are finding things difficult but shortly afterwards, they make friends and enjoy their time in the UK.

Understandably, at times, some of our students feel homesick and this may happen whilst they are staying with you as living in your home triggers their memories of being back in their home. If they are homesick there are several things you could do; encourage them to talk about their feelings, ask them to show you some photos of their home life, cook some food together which reminds them of home and, most importantly of all, show them empathy and care so that they feel secure. If they do open up to you and talk about their emotions, then it means they feel very secure with you.

You may also use reasonable, appropriate and lawful means to provide comfort if in distress. If, for example, your student is upset it might be appropriate to sit with them for a while. But try to do this in a communal area rather than in the student's bedroom.

Alert the guardians 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.

Understand and recognise the signs

If the situation gets worse and the students have physical symptoms such as frequent crying, difficulty sleeping and changes in appetite, nausea, dizziness and headaches, or mental symptoms include depression, anxiety and lack of concentration, please contact Amber Guardianships immediately.

In the unlikely event that you had to use any form of physical restraint then you must contact Amber Guardianships immediately to explain the circumstances. Under no circumstances must physical punishment be used.

3.3 Caring for Distressed Students

Anxiety is a normal response to a perceived danger or threat to one's well-being or self-esteem. For some students, the cause of their anxiety is clear, such as their worries about the current world events. But for others it may be difficult to determine.

Regardless of the cause, one or more of the following symptoms may be experienced: rapid heartbeat, chest pain or discomfort, dizziness, sweating, trembling or shaking, and cold, clammy hands. The student may also complain of difficulty concentrating, always being "on edge," having difficulty making decisions, sleeping problems or being too fearful to act.

In rare cases, a student may experience a panic attack in which physical symptoms occur spontaneously and intensely in such a way that the student may fear he or she is dying. The following guidelines are appropriate in most cases.

It is helpful to:

- Let them discuss their feelings and thoughts. Often, this alone relieves some of the pressure.

- Provide reassurance.
- Talk slowly and remain calm.
- Be clear and direct.
- Provide a safe, quiet environment until symptoms subside.

It is not helpful to:

- Minimise the perceived threat to which the student is reacting.
- Take responsibility for their emotional state.
- Overwhelm them with information or ideas to "fix" their condition.
- Become anxious or overwhelmed.

Encourage the student to seek professional help if the anxiety is interfering with their normal routine such as they are unable to study, sleep or relationships have been affected

3.4 Communicable Illness and Infection Control

During a contagious pandemic, it is highly unlikely that Amber Guardianships will place our students with the host, either when the school is closed, mid-term holiday or exact, or provide "quarantine" on their return from their home countries.

This is due to the risk to host families themselves and the wider community. There are also insurance implications for both host families and guardianship organisations should they agree to take on students at risk of being contagious. Amber Guardianships will have discussions with the school and parents about this.

Self-isolation within a host family would not be possible as a child would need to separate themselves and live independently from the rest of the family. This scenario presents a difficult situation.

Removal of students displaying symptoms of Communicable illness

For reasons relating to the limitations of host families, Amber Guardianships organisation is not in a position to take over the care of students with suspected Communicable illness. We are relying on schools taking the latest advice from the Boarding Schools Association.

"It is wise now to consider which areas of the boarding provision could best be used to help isolate pupils and contain any outbreak if this became necessary. Many schools will have already done this as part of epidemic and pandemic contingency planning."

In the event of a school closure

Amber Guardianships will support the school with the student's forward planning, providing the students have not been to, come from or had contact with anyone from an affected area, by providing host family accommodation for healthy students. This may be with their usual host family or with another host family with Amber Guardianships having done safety and security checks.

If there is a school closure and students at the affected school are displaying symptoms and/or awaiting test results for Communicable illness, Amber Guardianships are unable to accommodate these students in host families, due to the risk to the host family and wider communities. Any such

student will need to remain within the school's isolation provision, until they receive the all-clear, or are admitted to a medical facility. If a student receives a negative test result, the host will then accommodate them as stated above.

In the event of developing symptoms whilst staying with a host

If a student develops symptoms after being placed in a host family and your student presents with possible symptoms of a communicable illness however mild please follow these instructions:

- Inform Amber Guardianships by our emergency number, Joey Tang, 07939 682757, Amber Guardianships will then take responsibility for communicating with parents and assisting you and offering telephone and email support.
- Do not permit your student to leave your home when their symptoms started and being unwell. (This will help protect others in your community while they are infectious)
- Ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home to take care of your student.
- Ask your student to stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home if possible

- Your student should have a single room available to them should they fall ill
- Your student should ideally have their own bathroom to use but if this is not possible, they should be asked to clean the surfaces and toilet each time they use it. Please have cleaning items available to them and show them all these when they first arrive.
- All family members, including your student, should wash their hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- You should ask your student to stay away from vulnerable individuals, such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions, as much as possible
- You do not need to call NHS 111 to place a student into isolation. If your student's symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999
- Amber Guardianships will instigate proper testing and isolation procedures until the students are given the all clear, or admitted to a medical facility.

4. Fire and Health & Safety

Amber Education will establish detailed written procedures to deal with foreseeable situations that could present serious and imminent danger.

4.1. Safety

- A minimum of one smoke alarm to be installed on every storey.
- A carbon monoxide alarm to be installed in any room containing a gas, liquid or solid fuel burning appliance.

- An annual gas safety check to be undertaken by a Gas Safe registered engineer. To ensure that this is correct and up to date Amber Guardianships will ask the host family for a copy of the certificate to be kept by Amber.
- The homestay must ensure that the electrical system is safe, for example, sockets and light fittings are secure and not overloaded and any appliances used by the student are safe.
- The homestay must discuss the possible evacuation routes from the property with students on a regular basis. If doors or windows are locked students must know where to find the key in the event of a fire.
- The homestays will be asked if they have fire extinguishers or fire blankets unless the property is classed as a house in multiple occupations. This is not a must, but Amber Guardianships recommends this as an additional safety measure for the students. Fire extinguishers and fire blankets must be suitably serviced.
- Where open fires are used, a suitable fire guard should be in place when the fire is lit.
- Any matches / lighters should be appropriately stored.
- Please check any electrical equipment your student may bring and help them to buy an adapter plug if they need one. Ask students to use UK plugs only and not to use overseas adaptors as these can be a source of fire. UK mobile phone and laptop adaptors are relatively easy and inexpensive to obtain.
- Any prescription medication and drugs should be kept safe, especially when hosting young students.
- Alcohol should be appropriately stored.
- The homestay should have an awareness of basic food hygiene when preparing meals for students.
- The homestay should ensure that any food purchased by the students is properly stored.
- Bedroom doors should be capable of being opened safely in an emergency while still respecting student privacy.
- Students are advised not to use improper, inadequate or defective equipment and explain to the student the use of any household equipment.
- If students use of the kitchen area and kitchen equipment, care should be taken at all times and oven gloves used when carrying hot plates and dishes.
- Microwaved food and liquids should be treated with extreme care and gloves worn when removing items from the oven.
- Boiling water and steam from kettles can burn easily. Students should ensure they do not stand too close to a steaming kettle and never leave boiling liquid or pans unattended on a hob.
- Should there be an accident or incident in the home or while a student is in the care of the host family this should be reported to Amber Guardianships UK and the attached incident report form completed.

4.2. Games and outdoor activities

Host families can bring the student out to do family activities, however, these activities must be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL beforehand and will need consent from the parents. A number of

games and outdoor activities are inherently hazardous and the risks of injury resulting from inadequate premises, equipment or supervision are proportionately large. All those supervising these games and activities, for instance rugby, fencing, rowing, archery, riding, swimming, trampolining, use of free weights and martial arts, must be competent and holders of recognised and appropriate qualifications.

Risk assessments concerning pupil riders, swimmers, weightlifters and those engaged in martial arts or outdoor pursuits and the arrangements for their supervision must always be in writing.

4.3. First Aid

All host families should have a first aid box. The St John's Ambulance advice line recommends the following contents: 4 triangular bandages, 6 medium bandages with 2 large wound dressings, 20 individually wrapped plasters, 2 eye pads, 1 pair of sharp scissors, 1 box of disposable gloves to be discarded after each use. Creams and ointments suitable for small cuts and grazes.

5. Student Behaviour and Need

5.1 Student Code of Conduct at Host Family – Please see Student Handbook for more information

Students are given a Student Handbook outlining the positive behaviour the host expects from students. It also provides information about specific laws in the UK, including:

- Alcohol: It is forbidden to all persons under the age of 18 years old to consume alcohol.
- Drugs: The use of non-prescribed drugs is strictly forbidden and the law regarding this is enforced very strictly.
- Smoking/vaping: It is a criminal offence to buy tobacco products under the age of 18. Smoking is forbidden in schools and in most public places.
- Bullying: It is not acceptable to take part in any behaviour towards another person that negatively affects them either physically, mentally or emotionally. Students should also be aware of the Bullying, Cyberbullying and Online Safety policies.

The aim of this is to provide guidance for students in key areas of Amber Guardianships expectations. The guidance is written for the benefit of students, parents /agents, staff and homestays.

Amber Guardianships also expects our students to be polite and courteous when staying with a homestay. In the UK, it is expected that you say "please" and "thank you" when asking for and receiving items. Your homestay is not like living in a hotel and we expect you will be included as part of the family. As such, you will be expected to engage with family members, joining them at mealtimes, and possibly helping with chores such as laying the table. Your homestay will explain their own house rules with you when you arrive. Please do ask them if you have any questions.

Every Host Family has their own house rules which will be given to students upon arrival. Our students will respect and follow them accordingly.

5.2 Money Matters

Students of 16 years and above will be responsible for their own pocket money. We will not take responsibility for 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.

5.2.1 Payments and Finance

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.

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.

5.2.2 Host Family Payment Rates

Please find the nightly payment rates in Host Family Contract. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator.

Homestay will send us an invoice to list all the expenses for the duration of our student's stay. Amber will pay it in full before the student arrives. All payments to homestays are transacted promptly and are appropriately recorded. All financial matters, including our pay rates to you, must remain confidential between you and Amber Guardianships, handled through your Area Coordinator or Coordinator Administrator. Do not disclose this information to students, their families, other guardianship companies, or host provider companies.

5.2.3 Expenses and Payment

5.2.3.1 Trips Payment

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. Any big outing must be agreed by yourself and your Area Coordinator/Coordinator Administrator prior to the trip taking place.

5.2.3.2 Expense

All expenses claimed by host families are charged to the Student Expense Account. Amber Guardianships must be able to justify and explain all expenditure to parents when they receive their invoices each term. The following payments are made:

- Accommodation fee per student per night or part thereof
- Mileage plus an hourly rate for school collections, airport runs or excursions solely for the student if the host transports the student
- General expenses include but are not limited to, meals out, concerts, theme parks, cinema, or theatre tickets, pocket money, dry cleaning and haircuts.

Please inform Amber Guardianships for any expenses claims, but please seek authorisation from Amber Guardianship first.

When claiming expenses, include receipts whenever possible. You will be provided with a claim form which you can complete by hand or email and then return it to us along with scanned/photographed copies or paper copies of your receipts. We shall process your claim within 10 working days of receipt and make payments directly into your bank account.

5.2.3.3 Loss and Damage:

Homestay providers and Amber Guardianships will not be liable for any conduct of the student. Amber Guardianships will not be responsible for compensating the host for any loss or damage caused by the student when in the host families. If the Student causes material damage (other than fair wear and tear) to the host property we will do what we reasonably can to recover the cost of repair or replacement from the parents, but without being obliged to take legal action, or incur expenses beyond letters or telephone calls.

6. Annual Training

Amber Guardianships will train you in all matters relating to safeguarding and provide you with regular updates at least on an annual basis and more frequently than this if circumstances dictate. Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Prevent / Anti-Radicalisation Policy and Missing Student Policy along with other linked policies will be emailed to you with our Host Family contract. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of our students and expect all our staff, host families and working partners to share this commitment.

The training includes:

- providing our hosts with an induction including safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.
- All our hosts must have Safeguarding and Child Protection Level 1 certificate and all hosts must complete safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role, supported by annual safeguarding updates and refresher training.
- Amber will update the safeguarding regulations and other issues annually.

7. Host Family Statement of Service

Amber Guardianships 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, Amber Guardianships supports students from a range of international backgrounds, cultures and educational systems. 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 Guardianships will maintain communication with both students and host family.

1. Amber Education guardianship responsibilities

The parents have appointed Amber guardianships to act as Education guardians for the student. 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.

2. Contact with 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 any emergency.

3. Information

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

- Details of the periods the student is 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 possible.

4. 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 Guardianships 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 local authority will be informed by the guardian.

5. Payment

We agree to make payments to you in accordance with the host family contract, this varies between locations within London and outside of London.

6. Private fostering arrangements with the local authority

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.

This applies where the Student is under 16, and where the stay is planned for 28 days or more. We will inform the Local Authority of the arrangements as soon as these arrangements have been made.

Amber Guardianships 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 Guardianships 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 students welfare and health & safety.

Amber Guardianships Area/Local Coordinators

All of our Area/ Local Coordinators 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 be solved with their help! We do say that you can call the 24/7 emergency number at any time but please bear in mind that Area/ Local Coordinators have families and therefore, please do try to contact them during office hours as much as possible if it is not an emergency.

8. SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS

If you have any comments on this booklet, any of our literature or operating procedures and how they may be improved then please email us at joey.tang@amberedu.co.uk. We value working with you but appreciate you may, on occasion, have concerns about Amber Guardianships. If so, please contact either your Local Guardian or Joey Tang, Operations Manager and we will try to resolve things to your satisfaction. If, however, you still feel aggrieved or concerned, Amber Guardianships has Complaints Policy upon request, and you can follow the procedures suggested within it.

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.

Appendix 1: Local Safeguarding Authorities Contact

Local Authorities in all the areas where Amber Guardianships operates:

Role	Name	Telephone Number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Joey Tang	020 7734 0274 Monday to Friday (9:30-18:30) 07939 682757 (24 hours/7 days)	joey.tang@amberedu.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Louisa Cheung	020 7734 0274 Monday to Friday (9:00-18:00) 07534 769764 (24 hours/7 days)	louisa.cheung@amberedu.co.uk
<i>Amber Education (UK) Services Limited</i>	Joey Tang Louisa Cheung	07939 682757 07534 769764	
Local Safeguarding Partner (LSP)	Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, First Floor, Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8	Tel: 07739 315 388	Amber Guardianships DSL liaises with LSP by email and make them aware of our activities.
LADO	Westminster Access Team	Tel: 020 7641 4000 (Out of hours – 020 7641 6000) For case consultations or LADO referrals, please phone the Duty Child Protection Advisor in the first instance on 020 7641 7668	LADO@westminster.gov.uk

Other useful telephone numbers: NSPCC: 08088005000 and Child-line: 08001111

Amber Guardianships UK's head office is in London, and our guardianship students spread over different counties. The LSP and LADO contact details can be found on the website for the local authority the child lives in, and on the table below.

Contact Details

Role	Name	Telephone Number	Email
LSP	Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, First Floor, Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8	Tel: 07739 315 388	John Griffin Child Protection Adviser Telephone: 020 7641 1615 Email: jgriffin@westminster.gov.uk
LADO	Westminster Access Team	Tel: 020 7641 4000 (Out of hours – 020 7641 6000)	Email: For case consultations or LADO referrals, please phone the Duty Child Protection Advisor in the first instance on 020 7641 7668 or email LADO@westminster.gov.uk

Contact Details for LSPs and LADOs across the areas that Amber Guardianships operates

Area	Role and Name of contact	Telephone Number	Email
Cambridge	Safeguarding Children Partnership Board	0345 0455203 Emergency duty team: 01733 234724	Safeguardingboards@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Kent	Kent Safeguarding Children multi- agency partnership	Reporting line: 03000411111	kscmp@kent.gov.uk
Somerset	SSCP	01823 355803	childrens@somerset.gov.uk
North Yorkshire	NYSCP	01609535123	nyscp@northyorks.gov.uk
West Yorkshire	West Yorkshire Consortium Inter	02476678053	info@trixonline.co.uk

	Agency Safeguarding and Child Protection		
Durham	SLP	03000 267979	firstcontact@durham.gov.uk
Lancashire	Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board	03001236720 0300 123 6722(out of hours 5pm-8am)	
Leicester	Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership Board	0116 4541004 (24 hours)	Das-team@leicester.gov.uk
North Somerset	North Somerset Safeguarding	01275 888808(Monday-Friday 8am-6pm 01454 615165 Out of hours and weekends	
South Wales	South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSC)	01495 762200(8:30-17:00 Monday to Friday	Caltorfaen@torfaen.gov.uk

Details can be found on the Local Authority website. The website below provides a link to all of the LSPs in the country:

<https://www.safecic.co.uk/your-scb-acpc/55-free-downloads-and-safeguarding-links/61-safeguarding-children-board-links>

<https://www.childprotectionuk.co.uk/local-safeguarding-children-boards-for-england-and-wales.php>

Appendix 2 – Staff and Homestay Code of Conduct

Please refer to the AG Staff Handbook for the Staff Code of Conduct.

1.3 Homestay Family Code of Conduct

1) Power and Positions of Trust

1.1 Homestay families hold a position of trust and authority in relation to students. It is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 for any person in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child under 18 in their care, even if that young person is over the age of consent. The age of consent for sexual activity in the UK is 16, but it rises to 18 where one party holds a position of trust.

1.2 Homestay Families must never abuse their position of trust or authority. This includes any behaviour that could be perceived as grooming, inappropriate favouritism, or the development of a personal relationship with a student that goes beyond their professional role. Abuse of a position of trust is unacceptable and could result in prosecution.

2) Duty of Care to Children and Young People

2.1 All homestay families have a duty of care to children and young people. Homestay families must remember that they are adults at work, with a responsibility for their own behaviour and a duty of care for the students in their charge. Pupils have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity.

2.2 All homestay families are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of students at all times, to follow the Company's safeguarding and child protection procedures, and to report any concerns about a student's welfare to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.

3) Exercising Professional Judgement

3.1 All homestay families are expected to exercise their professional judgement at all times and to act in the best interests of students. Where specific guidance does not exist within this Code, homestay families should apply their knowledge, skills and experience, informed by professional standards and ethical principles, to make sound decisions.

3.2 Any situation in which a member of host families is unsure how to proceed should be raised with the Amber Education Operations Manager. Any significant decision taken on the basis of professional judgement, particularly in relation to student welfare, should be documented and reported.

4) Use of Appropriate Language

4.1 All homestay families must at all times use language that is professional, respectful and appropriate to the context. The use of offensive, discriminatory, inappropriate or sexualised language in the presence of students, or directed at students, will not be tolerated.

4.2 The use of sarcasm, inappropriate nicknames, or language that could cause embarrassment, offence or distress to a student or colleague is prohibited. All homestay families should model the high standards of communication they expect from others.

5) Sexual Contact with Young People

5.1 Any form of sexual contact or sexual relationship between a member of a homestay family and a student under the age of 18 is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust), regardless of whether the young person appears to give their consent.

Furthermore, regardless of a student's age, members of homestay families must not engage in any sexual contact, sexual relationship, or inappropriate physical contact with a student. Homestay families must ensure that their conduct towards students is professional, appropriate, and beyond reproach at all times.

5.2 All homestay families must report immediately to Amber Education Designated Safeguarding Lead any situation in which they believe a person is acting in a way that puts a student at risk of sexual harm, or where a student discloses any sexual contact with an adult working in or on behalf of the Company.

6) Communication with Students

6.1 All communication with students must be conducted through official Company channels using approved Guardian and Host's WhatsApp Group, e-mail, devices or systems. All homestay families must not communicate with students via personal email accounts, personal social media accounts, or personal messaging applications such as WhatsApp, Snapchat or Instagram, unless this has been expressly approved by the Company for specific operational purposes.

6.2 All homestay families must never give students their personal contact details and must never add, follow or interact with a student through a personal social media account. All communications with students must be transparent, professional and appropriate to the member of staff's role.

7) Social Contact with Students

7.1 Social contact between homestay families and students outside of professional duties must remain appropriate and within professional boundaries. Homestay families should not seek to develop personal relationships with students that go beyond their professional role, and must not invite students to their personal home or accept invitations to a student's home.

7.2 Homestay families must not engage in activities with students outside of approved Company activities, and must not pursue personal social contact with students, for example, through private meetings, outings, or events not sanctioned by the Company.

8) Social Contact with Parents / Agents / Staff at Partner Schools

8.1 Contact with parents, agents, Amber Education staff and homestay families at partner schools must remain professional and be conducted through official Company channels. Staff must not develop personal or social relationships with parents, agents or partner school staff that could compromise their professional objectivity or give rise to a real or perceived conflict of interest.

8.2 All formal communications must be documented. Homestay families should be mindful that any contact outside of official channels could be perceived as inappropriate and should seek guidance from Amber Education if they are unsure about the appropriateness of any contact.

9) Physical Contact Including Restraint

9.1 All homestay families should be aware that any physical contact with students may be open to misinterpretation. Physical contact should only take place when it is clearly necessary, in a safe and open environment easily observed by others, and for the minimum time necessary. All physical contact must be appropriate to the professional role of homestay families.

9.2 Physical restraint should only be used in exceptional circumstances where a student is placing themselves or others at immediate risk of harm. Any use of physical restraint must be reported immediately to the line manager, a written record must be submitted promptly, and parents or guardians will be informed. A full review will follow any such incident.

10) An Outright Ban on Any Physical Punishment

10.1 The use of corporal or physical punishment is illegal and is absolutely prohibited under any circumstances. Physical punishment must never be used as a means of managing a student's behaviour, regardless of the situation or the perceived severity of the student's conduct.

10.2 Any member of homestay families found to have used physical punishment will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, which may include dismissal and referral to the relevant statutory authorities.

11) Care of Distressed Students

11.1 When a student is distressed, homestay families should respond with care and sensitivity. Any comfort offered must be age-appropriate, proportionate, and take place in an open and visible environment. Physical contact offered to comfort a distressed student should be with the student's agreement, appropriate to the circumstances, and should be the minimum necessary.

11.2 All homestay families should seek support from Amber Education when dealing with a distressed student. Significant incidents involving student distress must be documented and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Homestay families must be vigilant for signs of mental health difficulties or welfare concerns and act in accordance with the Company's safeguarding procedures.

12) One-to-One Meetings

12.1 Wherever practicable, one-to-one meetings with students should take place in a room with windows onto a corridor so that occupants can be seen by others, or with the door open, or in a location where other adults are present nearby, if possible. Homestay families should inform Amber Education in advance that such a meeting is taking place.

12.2 One-to-one meetings must not take place in secluded areas or behind closed doors in a student's bedroom. Where a meeting takes place on a digital platform, homestay families should apply the same principles of transparency and should retain a record of the interaction. Homestay families should always be alert to the possibility that one-to-one contact could be misinterpreted.

13) Students' Entitlement to Privacy

13.1 Students are entitled to privacy, most importantly in their bedroom and when using the bathroom and washing facilities. Homestay providers must not enter a student's room without prior warning or the student's consent, and must ensure that bathroom and washing facilities can always be used in private.

13.2 Students' right to personal space and private time must be respected. Homestay families must not access students' personal belongings, correspondence, devices or communications without proper authority. Students' personal data must be handled in accordance with the Company's data protection policy.

14) Transporting Students

14.1 Where homestay families are required to transport students, this must be planned and approved in advance by a designated responsible adult. Wherever possible, students should not be transported in private vehicles; a second adult should be present as an escort where practicable. Homestay families must hold a valid driving licence and appropriate insurance before transporting any student.

14.2 All transport arrangements must be documented, and parents or guardians must be informed in advance. Homestay families must never transport a student alone in a private vehicle without prior approval from Amber Education. Any concerns arising during transport must be reported to Amber Education as soon as possible.

15) Gifts and Rewards

15.1 Homestay families must not give personal gifts to students or their families, as this could be misinterpreted as an attempt to build an inappropriate relationship, groom a student, or create a sense of obligation.

Any reward given to a student must be consistent with the Company's policy, transparent, properly recorded, and must not reflect personal favouritism.

15.2 Homestay families must not accept gifts of significant monetary value from students, parents or agents. Where a gift of purely nominal value is offered as a gesture of courtesy, this should be disclosed to Amber Education. The receipt of hospitality or gifts of value that could be seen to influence professional decisions is prohibited.

16) Use of Photographs and Videos

16.1 Homestay families must not take photographs or videos of students without the explicit prior consent of the student and, where the student is under 18, the written consent of their parent or guardian. Images may only be taken on Company-approved devices and must not be stored on personal devices. Photographs and videos of students are classed as personal data under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

16.2 Images of students must not be shared on personal social media accounts, personal websites or any public forum without written consent. All images must be stored securely in accordance with the Company's data protection policy and used only for the stated and approved purpose. Homestay families must report any misuse of student images to the line manager immediately.

17) Searching Students and Their Belongings

17.1 Searches of students or their belongings may only be conducted by authorised staff members/homestay families, in accordance with the Company's policy and applicable law, and must always be carried out with a witness present. Any search must be conducted with full regard for the student's dignity, privacy and wellbeing.

17.2 The outcome of any search, including what was found and any action taken, must be documented and reported to the appropriate person. Homestay families must not conduct searches on an ad hoc or unsanctioned basis, and must seek guidance from their line manager before conducting any search where they are unsure of the appropriate procedure.

18) Reference to Low Level Concerns

18.1 A low-level concern is any concern — no matter how small, and even if no more than a sense of unease or a nagging doubt — that a member of homestay families may have acted in a way that is

inconsistent with this Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, but which does not meet the threshold for a formal referral to statutory agencies.

18.2 Examples of low-level concerns include: being overly familiar or friendly with students, having favourites, taking photographs of students contrary to Company policy, engaging with a student on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or using inappropriate, sexualised or offensive language. All low-level concerns must be reported in writing to Amber Education or Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded. Records should be reviewed to identify any patterns of inappropriate behaviour.

19) Reference to Whistleblowing

19.1 All homestay families have a duty and a right to raise concerns about a colleague's behaviour or conduct that they believe may put a student at risk. Homestay families who raise genuine concerns in good faith will not be at risk of losing their jobs or suffering any detriment as a result of making a disclosure. The Company considers it a serious disciplinary matter to victimise or penalise any person who has raised a genuine safeguarding concern.

19.2 Concerns may be raised with Amber Education, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or directly with the CEO. Where the concern involves the CEO, staff may contact the relevant external authority. Staff should keep a record of any concerns raised and the responses received.

20) Reference to Allegations Against Adults / Staff / Homestay families

20.1 Any allegation that a person has behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a student; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a student; or behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to students, must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the allegation is against the Designated Safeguarding Lead, it must be reported to the CEO.

20.2 The Company will follow the procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education and will make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where required. Any person subject to an allegation will be informed of the allegation and provided with appropriate support throughout the process. All allegations will be handled with confidentiality, sensitivity and urgency.

