



Parent Handbook

Updated: 24/04/21

UK2Learn Guardianship Ltd “UK2Learn” provides a personal, yet professional guardianship service for international students studying in the UK. We are a small, family company that knows all our students personally and our high level of experience means we can cope with all demands.

We aim to make sure that each student can fulfil their academic potential in a safe, caring environment as a member of the UK2Learn family.

Key information

Address:	UK2Learn, Crossways, Heath Lane, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1UN
Office number:	+44 (0) 1483 425500 (Monday - Friday, 09.00 - 17.30)
Office mobile number:	+44 (0) 7786 934555 (Monday - Friday, 09.00 - 17.30)
Emergency number:	+44 (0) 7917 820033 (available at all times)
Email:	guardianship@uk2learn.com
Office opening hours:	Monday – Friday, 09.00 - 17.30
Office closed:	UK Bank Holidays and Christmas Week

Welcome from Alex Mackie



Welcome, my name is Alex Mackie and I am the Director of UK2Learn. At UK2Learn we do everything we can to make our students feel welcome and to safeguard and promote the student's welfare outside of school.

Thank you so much for choosing UK2Learn to care for your child. We will assume full guardianship responsibility for your child whilst they are in the UK and my amazing team takes great pride in knowing each student personally, this is to ensure that all our students are in safe, professional and, above all, caring hands.

UK2Learn aims to deliver a service that cares for every aspect of an overseas student's stay in the UK, therefore removing any worries that you or your child may have. Investing in an overseas education for your child can be an incredibly difficult decision but the reward of a unique and life-changing experience is a fantastic one.

All UK2Learn staff, associates and host families support this caring and personal ethos that UK2Learn values so greatly, thus ensuring that all of our students receive the highest standard of care possible. With representatives and host families throughout the UK, help and assistance is never far away.

If you could please read this handbook and make sure that you are happy with it all and if you have any questions, you can of course just ask. This handbook is designed to help parents understand what UK2Learn offers and it should answer any questions that you might have but if you do want to ask us anything, you can get in touch by email, WhatsApp or WeChat.

Meet the UK2Learn team



Sheila Hastings-Rose – Student Care Coordinator

Sheila provides full-time support for UK2Learn students, liaising with parents, students and schools, travel arrangements, the booking of host families and other administrative duties. As a qualified EFL teacher, Sheila has worked in schools both in the UK and abroad and enjoys getting to know the young people in her care to make sure they are happy and well cared for. Sheila has a son and daughter in their early twenties and a little dog called Misty.



Lucy Barton – Student Care Coordinator

Lucy provides full-time support for UK2Learn students, assisting with all day-to-day matters whilst also updating UK2Learn’s social media channels. Lucy also ensures that the UK2Learn office runs smoothly and all students have a range of exciting activities to get involved with at the weekends. Lucy loves baking, yoga, theatre, travelling and all animals.



Emma Rowe – Accounts Manager

Emma is our accounts manager and deals with invoicing and other financial matters. Emma is married and has two children a daughter currently studying music at Oxford University and a son studying at a local private school. Emma was also a boarding school student herself, so knows all there is to know about boarding in the UK.



Philip Canton – Transport Manager

Philip is our transport manager and will be a very familiar face to lots of our students as he will likely have driven them to or from school at some point. Philip is actually a distant relative of Alex’s, being a third cousin. When Philip is not driving, he enjoys surfing, kite surfing, diving and just generally being near the ocean. Philip is married with 3 children and has 2 small pugs.

Role of the Guardian

Whilst at the school, your child's houseparent will take responsibility for academic progress and welfare, but there are times during the academic year when the school must be able to hand over these responsibilities to a properly appointed guardian.

There can be unforeseen events such as illness or injury which requires an emergency trip to the dentist or hospital, closure of airports and cancellations of flights which require last minute logistical assistance and disciplinary incidents which may result in a student being unable to remain on school premises and requiring overnight accommodation for a period of time.

There is also more practical day to day aspects of a student's study in the UK which will need additional support and assistance such as purchasing a UK sim card, opening a bank account, managing school trip schedules and purchases of additional kit, booking safe and reliable airport or private transfers off school grounds and most importantly host family accommodation for fixed exeats/leave weekends and half term when the school is closed and a student is not travelling home.

UK2Learn aims to deliver a service that enhances every aspect of an overseas student's stay in the UK. UK2Learn work closely with the school and houseparents' and we are always happy to attend school events, parents' evenings, concerts and matches as requested.

UK2Learn offers 4 levels of services (Gold, Silver, Bronze and University) that will be relevant to the age and the amount of support you require for your child. As part of our Guardianship service, the following support can be offered to our students:

- 24/7 emergency care and assistance
- Contact with student via social media or phone
- Assigned a dedicated member of the UK2Learn team to provide student with support
- Proof of guardianship letter to show immigration control at UK arrivals
- Personalised birthday card sent to student each year
- Consultation with school/university regarding academic progress, discipline or any other school matter
- Visit to see student at school/university and or host family
- Arrangement of host family accommodation
- Arrangement of taxi transfers
- Arrangement of train and bus bookings
- Financial management of pocket money
- Assistance with top up of 'pay as you go' mobile phones
- Assistance when purchasing a UK phone sim card
- Arrangement and purchase of flight tickets
- Attendance at parents' conference/teacher meetings with written up report
- Assistance with opening a UK bank account
- Assistance with parents' visit to the UK, booking accommodation, airport transfers etc
- Assistance finding a personal tutor and introduction
- Storage of luggage during holidays
- Postage of luggage or other items

- New school or university advice, research and application

Role of the School

Your child's first few days and weeks at school can be an anxious time for everyone. The main point of contact at the school is usually your child's boarding house houseparent, who will give understanding and support to your child. A member of the UK2Learn team will email the houseparent after the first few days, and arrange for one of the UK2Learn team to visit in the first term to check how your child is settling in. During the visit, we will endeavour to speak to your child's houseparent and tutor, and we can do this on your behalf at any time should you have any concerns that you cannot address directly. It can take time for your child to get used to a new environment and culture, to meet new friends and to become familiar with the boarding house and school arrangements and during this sensitive time, UK2Learn will stay in close contact with your child to provide support and reassurance.

We provide up to three free visits per academic year to your child in their school, dependent on the service level you choose. During our visits we discuss academic performance, clubs and interests, friendships and life in the boarding house. We will notify you in advance of the date of the meeting to give you the opportunity to raise any questions or concerns you may have and we always try to take a photo during our visit which we can send back to you. We will do everything reasonable to ensure that your child is represented at parents' evenings and at other special events in which your child is involved and that you receive feedback.

Home sickness

Children are kept very active and engaged during their first few weeks at boarding school. They will be taking part in a very busy programme of study and extra-curricular activity. It is only in the odd few moments of downtime that your child will start to feel sad and may start to miss home. Sadly, it is in these occasional quieter moments when your child will tend to phone, text or email you, leading you to believe that they are feeling sad and distressed all of the time. Please message us if your child is experiencing homesickness and we can act with the school accordingly and help them feel better.

Role of the Host family

UK2Learn has a selection of wonderful host families and we carefully choose the right host family for your child depending upon their personality, interests and requirements. Host families are inspected by one of the UK2Learn team initially and provided with a comprehensive handbook containing guidelines regarding the care of international students and also specific information about your child which we expect them to follow. The host family will be one that is known to us and has been police-checked using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and reference checked.

Accommodation

Your child's room should include a bed, a table and chair, drawers, hanging space and a small bin for rubbish. Your child will have access to a bathroom and in some cases their own en-suite. Most importantly, your child will be provided with suitable accommodation where they feel safe and secure and can study or relax. When staying with a UK2Learn host family, it is not unusual for students to share a twin room with another student of a similar age and gender. This can be a very enjoyable experience for your child and allows them to meet students from different schools and quite often a different nationality, this will always be agreed upon and discussed with you and your child in advance.

Laundry and Cleaning

Your child will be provided with clean bedding, two towels and their room will be cleaned on a weekly basis. They will be able to wash their clothes during their stay which will be explained by their host family.

Communication and Internet Safety

In the UK, it is common for families to have a data limit on their internet capacity. We therefore ask that students staying in host families do not download large files, such as movies or games during their stay – or they must ask in advance. UK2Learn has guidelines for host families on the use of internet, and will advise host families to limit access time in the best interests of your child should your child regularly stay up very late at night and disturb the household; some hosts may restrict or switch off the internet overnight and all schools in the UK will have similar restrictions. There are also dangers to young people of unsupervised access to the internet, but the demand for access makes it impossible for UK2Learn and their host families to supervise or police this all the time. Therefore, the responsibility for internet use and downloads rests with your child and we cannot accept any liability in this respect.

Health and Safety

When your child arrives at their host families house, they will be given a tour of the whole house and, along the way, the host will demonstrate how to use various appliances and equipment they are likely to use during their stay; this could include the toaster, kettle, TV, shower, bath, etc.

Pocket Money

Your child's 'student expense account' held by UK2Learn will be used to pay for your child's additional expenses incurred in the UK. If your child would like pocket money to spend whilst they are staying with a host family then authorisation will need to be given by you and we can then organise for cash to be given to your child.

Bedtimes and Curfews

Your child's host family will agree a suitable bed time on their first night.

The bedtimes and curfews listed below are guidelines given by UK2Learn to all host families, these are only a guide so times may differ between host families and if your parents would like you to go to bed earlier or have a different curfew or not to be allowed out to the shops at all your host will use that information.

Aged 12 and under

Visiting the local shops: Are allowed to go with an adult

Bedtime: 21:00 (must be in their bedroom, showered and ready for bed)

Aged 13 and 14

Visiting local shops: Are allowed to go with their friends but must be back at 17:30

Bedtime: 22:00 (must be in their bedroom, showered and ready for bed)

Aged 15

Visiting local shops: Are allowed to go alone but must be back at 18:00

Bedtime: 22:00 (must be in their bedroom, showered and ready for bed)

Aged 16 and over

Visiting local shops: Are allowed to go alone but must be back at 18:00

Bedtime: 22:30 (must be in their bedroom, showered and ready for bed)

Excursions and Travel

On all occasions, your child must tell their host family where they are going and who they will be with. The host family will need to agree in advance what time your child will need to be home and walking home alone in the dark is not allowed. Your child will not be allowed to stay out overnight unless expressly agreed by Alex Mackie.

It is very important that your child and host family exchange mobile telephone numbers at the earliest opportunity. Host families are also asked to give their landline number and all other useful contact numbers. Your child should keep their mobile phone switched on, charged, and notify their host of a member of the UK2Learn team if there is a change of plan for whatever reason.

Complaints

In the unlikely event of your child being unhappy with their host family, we will do everything reasonable to mediate and, if necessary, to find an alternative host family. Most of our students return to the same host family for all their stays, but changes can and do occur due for many different reasons. If you or your child has a complaint or there is something, they are unhappy about they must contact a member of the UK2Learn team as soon as possible, our main aim is the welfare and well-being of all of our students and we will do all we can to rectify the problem.

House Rules

You must explain to your child that, when staying with a host family, they must accept and abide by the guidelines outlined in their Student Handbook regarding acceptable behaviour. Your child must obey all UK laws, the house rules, what the host family asks of them and to respect the authority of both their host family and UK2Learn.

Booking

When asking UK2Learn to arrange a host family, we ask that you give as much notice as possible of your requirements. Should you wish to cancel or amend any arrangements that have been made, we ask that you notify us within 48 hours in advance to avoid cancellation costs.

Staying with a non UK2learn host or family

UK2Learn have a duty of care to protect your child and to provide safe host family accommodation with a family that we know and have carried out all the relevant police checks, referencing which also includes a home visit to check suitability.

However, should you prefer your child to stay with a friend or family member for leave weekends and half-terms or even just once, **it must be with a responsible adult over the age of 25** and residing in the UK, who will take responsibility for your child during the stay. The responsible adult will need to confirm in writing that they will be taking responsibility for your child. Any such arrangement must be agreed with UK2Learn and your child's school and UK2Learn reserves the right to refuse any arrangement if we feel it is unsatisfactory in anyway as this is a legal requirement.

If this is your child's first time away from home, we would ask you to prepare your child for staying with another family; perhaps you could arrange for your child to stay with family or friends on a few occasions before they arrive in the UK.

Sports and Activities

Outside of school, if your child wants to take part in extra sport and activities, for example joining a local football club or go ice skating their host family will first check with UK2Learn as per our procedures and if we think the sport or activity appropriate, we will grant permission, if we are unsure for any reason, we will consult with you and confirm the arrangements. Parental consent as provided in your child profile form will be considered at all times.

Supervision and Control

UK2Learn and your child's host family will set out rules for supervision and whether your child can be alone in the house for short periods (for example the host needs to collect something from the post office), when your child can visit friends, go out in the immediate area, or may travel long distances unaccompanied. There will always be a responsible adult in the house when your child is staying overnight.

Respect for Rights

UK2Learn and your child's host family will respect your child's privacy and cultural and religious background and beliefs and any dietary needs.

Transport Arrangements

UK2Learn will ensure that travel and escort arrangements have been made in accordance with the travel itinerary of your child. UK2Learn will always book a UK2Learn driver for your child's transport if by car, we will send a profile of the driver including photograph, name and telephone number to your child when we confirm the arrangement. All our drivers are DBS checked and fully insured with good quality vehicles and we always try our best to always use the same driver but this may not always be possible during busier periods.

Alternatively, you may opt to liaise with your child's school transport department to book transfers.

We can also provide an Unaccompanied Minor (UM) service for younger or inexperienced students travelling, this might include helping your child to check in at the airport.

Should there be a major incident that closes an airport, the plan will be to ensure that your child is moved to a safe place and, if possible, to safe accommodation which will be dependent upon whether the incident takes place within the UK. All plans will be made in cooperation with the school, driver, parents, transport companies and any authorities involved in the incident. If a student's flight is cancelled or missed due to an incident, UK2Learn pledges to find them safe travel to a host family until their flight is rebooked. If a student needs to be accompanied at the airport, we will arrange an UK2Learn representative to sit and supervise your child until they can continue their journey.

For incidents outside the UK, UK2Learn will remain in contact with parents, school and student in the case where a student is stranded at an airport, and unaccompanied whilst attempting to travel back to the UK or back to home. Although we would be unable to travel to meet them, we will do all we can to liaise with authorities, any help or information centres and act as a go-between for parents, school and student.

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Email: guardianship@uk2learn.com

Unauthorised absence

Please be aware that schools require students to adhere to published school dates for the start and end of terms. Failure to do so can sometimes result in a record of unauthorised absence against your child which can affect future visa applications.

English Law and Customs

There may be differences between age limits and customs at home and those which apply in the UK. Where appropriate you must prepare your child for these. We will provide your child with a Student Handbook which we encourage your child to read and understand. We are happy to provide any other guidance that you require on this matter.

UK2Learn Guardianship always remembers.....

Culture	Values	Race	Customs
Religion	Food	Tradition	Expectations
Beliefs	Love & Marriage	Class	Sexuality
Gender	Special Needs	Language	

Telephone Contact

We strongly advise that you provide your child with a UK mobile telephone so that they use it easily within the UK and keep in touch with both yourself and us at all times. Alex Mackie and the UK2Learn team usually communicate with students and parents using WhatsApp or WeChat so we ask that you and your child download one or both of these services to your mobile devices so that we can communicate efficiently.

UK2Learn can assist in arranging a “pay as you go” mobile sim card for your child, but we cannot enter into phone contracts on behalf of students. Schools invariably control the use of mobiles and other electronic devices and discourage students from using their phones in an antisocial way. Your child should always keep their mobile phone charged and switched on when they are travelling to and from the UK and when they are staying with their host family in case there is a need to contact them.

Changes to Circumstances

You are responsible for updating UK2Learn should there be any changes to your circumstances or your child with respect to the information provided on your child profile form.

Liaison and Contact

We will do our best to make sure that there is regular liaison between you and your child and also between you and us.

Medical Details

We will pass on to the host family all relevant medical details and special dietary requirements which you have provided. In signing your part of the ‘Student Profile Form’, you consent to UK2Learn acting ‘in loco parentis’ so that we may take all action necessary for the welfare of your child, including emergency medical attention requiring operations and anaesthetics if necessary. Whilst every effort will always be made to contact you in the event of an emergency, this may not always be possible.

All students will be registered by their school with a doctor, sometimes known as a General Practitioner (GP) that is close to your child’s school.

Emergency Accommodation

In the event that your child suddenly needs to leave their school in an emergency, for example they have been suspended or the school closes, we will provide emergency accommodation with the most appropriate host family that is available, it is likely that this will not be their usual host family.

Insurance

UK2Learn has comprehensive business insurance including public liability insurance and all of our host families are advised to notify their home contents insurers and car insurers that they will be hosting international students.

You are responsible for making sure that your child and their belongings are adequately insured whilst they are studying in the UK. This can include but is not limited to, personal medical insurance and/or personal effects insurance. You must provide a copy of these insurances to UK2Learn before your child first arrives in UK.

Confidentiality

Your child's rights to confidentiality will be respected and will only be overridden if it is necessary to do so in order to protect your child's safety and welfare.

This Handbook Review

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Responsibility for handbook review:	Lucy Barton/Alex Mackie