

UK

Independent

Colleges

Guardianship

Parent Handbook

2024-2025

WELCOME MESSAGE TO PARENTS

Dear Parents,

On behalf of UK Independent Colleges Limited (UKIC), it is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you. We understand that entrusting your child's education and welfare to us is a significant decision, and we are grateful for your confidence in our organisation.

At UKIC, our primary mission is to provide a safe, supportive, and academically stimulating environment for your child. We believe in nurturing their potential, inspiring their curiosity, and fostering an international perspective that will help them thrive in a diverse and interconnected world.

Our team is composed of experienced professionals committed to offering exceptional educational opportunities and comprehensive guardianship services. They are dedicated to ensuring that every student under our care experiences the richness of British education and culture while feeling comfortable, safe, and valued.

In this handbook, you will find essential information about our operations, services, and policies. We believe transparency and effective communication are key to a successful relationship, and we encourage you to reach out to us should you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

We look forward to embarking on this educational journey with your child and your family. Together, we can make your child's time in the UK a rewarding, unforgettable experience.

Thank you for choosing UKIC.

OUR SERVICES

Here at UKIC, we offer a wide range of services designed to meet your child's needs and help them to adapt to their new environment. We handle everything from arranging for suitable accommodations, providing advice on local culture and customs, to organising recreational activities. Our goal is to ensure your child has a well-rounded experience, both academically and socially. We also liaise with your child's school or college to monitor their academic progress, attend parents' evenings, and provide detailed termly reports to parents.

OUR TEAM

Our team consists of professionals who are experienced in taking care of international students. We believe in making your child's stay as pleasant as possible, helping them overcome any challenges that may arise. All of our team members are ICEF qualified agent, British Council accredited UK agent and UK Counsellor.



Mr Min Zhang, Founder and Director, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Prevent Lead - With 15 years of experience in international education, Mr Min Zhang is our esteemed leader who ensures that UKIC stays true to its mission.

British Council UK Agent Certificate Code: 11776
British Council UK Counsellor Certificate Code: 11777
Tel: +44(0)7508118886
Email: info@primecolleges.co.uk

Mr Zhi XU, Senior Educational Consultant, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Data Controller - With a deep understanding of the UK education system, **Mr Zhi XU** is here to guide you academically, helping you navigate school life successfully.

Tel: +44(0)7300012772
Email: uk3@primecolleges.co.uk

WELCOME TO THE UKIC FAMILY

As your child embark on this new journey in the UK, we want you to know that they are not alone. We are here to help them every step of the way. So, don't hesitate to reach out to us if they need any assistance or if you just want to chat. Welcome to our family, and here's to a wonderful, exciting, and successful academic journey in the UK!

Warm Regards,

Min Zhang
Director, UK Independent Colleges Limited (UKIC)
Tel: +44(0)7508118886
Email: info@primecolleges.co.uk

ROLE OF THE GUARDIANSHIP ORGANISATION (UKIC)

Our primary role as UK Independent Colleges Limited (UKIC) is to be your child's guide and support system while they study in the UK. We will oversee their welfare, academic progress, and overall experience.

Welfare Management: We ensure their well-being and safety throughout their stay. We coordinate with their schools, homestays, and other third parties to address any concerns or problems they might have. We also assist in medical emergencies, ensuring they receive the necessary care promptly.

Academic Support: We liaise with their school, track their academic progress, attend parents' evenings, and share termly reports with parents. We're here to help them navigate the school system and offer support and advice to help them achieve their academic goals.

Cultural Adaptation: We provide guidance and advice to help them adapt to the UK's culture and lifestyle, organising cultural immersion activities and providing them with the necessary tools to integrate seamlessly into their new environment.

Communication Bridge: We act as the communication bridge between you, your child, their school, and their homestay family. We ensure everyone is informed about their progress and welfare.

ROLE OF THE GUARDIAN

UKIC Guardian is your child's primary contact person at UKIC. They are your child's go-to person for day-to-day assistance and are dedicated to supporting them throughout their academic journey.

Personal Support: UKIC Guardian is available to help with any queries or issues your child may face, whether academic, personal, or logistical.

Advocacy: UKIC Guardian will represent your child's interests in all matters with their school and homestay. They will ensure your child's needs are met and their rights are respected.

Regular Check-ins: UKIC Guardian will regularly communicate with your child to check on their well-being and progress, providing a consistent line of communication between them and UKIC.

ROLE OF THE HOMESTAY

Homestay plays a crucial role in providing a comfortable, safe, and nurturing environment where your child can live and study effectively.

Accommodation: The homestay provides your child with a clean, comfortable, and fully-furnished room where they can rest, study, and relax.

Meals: The homestay provides nutritious meals daily, catering to dietary needs where necessary.

Cultural Immersion: Living with a local family, your child gets the opportunity to learn about British culture, customs, and lifestyle first-hand, enriching their overall experience in the UK.

Support and Care: The homestay family is there to offer emotional support, care, and a friendly environment, making sure your child feels at home during their stay.

Safety and Supervision: The homestay family ensures your child's safety and wellbeing at all times, providing responsible adult supervision in line with UKIC and AEGIS guidelines.

Remember, UKIC Guardian and homestay are all part of your child's support network in the UK, working together to ensure your child's successful and enriching study experience in the UK. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us whenever your child needs assistance or has concerns.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

When your child is under the guardianship of UKIC, the school they attend plays a critical role in ensuring their wellbeing, safety, and academic success. Here are key aspects of the school's responsibilities:

Partnership with UKIC - The school works closely with UKIC to ensure the welfare of the student. This partnership involves regular communication about the student's progress, behaviour, and any issues that might arise. Both entities cooperate to provide a consistent and supportive approach to the student's care.

Academic Progress - The school is responsible for the student's academic progression. Teachers track and report on the student's performance, ensuring they are achieving their potential and addressing any academic difficulties promptly. UKIC receives regular updates to stay informed about the student's academic status.

Student Welfare and Safety - The school ensures the student's safety during school hours. This includes not only physical safety but also emotional wellbeing. The school has policies in place to address bullying, discrimination, and any other issues that could affect the student's wellbeing. They maintain a nurturing and inclusive environment, communicating any concerns to UKIC as necessary.

Support Services - Schools offer various support services such as academic counselling, pastoral care, and special education services when required. These services are accessible to students under UKIC guardianship, and any utilisation of these services is communicated to UKIC.

Emergency Contact - In case of emergencies, the school will contact UKIC immediately. The school also has a duty of care to the student during school trips and extracurricular activities.

Day-to-Day Care - While the school is primarily responsible for the student's academic progress, they also play a part in their day-to-day care. This can involve ensuring the student has eaten properly, addressing any minor health concerns (like headaches or minor injuries), and overseeing the student's general behaviour and wellbeing.

The role of the school in facilitating the care of students under the guardianship of UKIC is invaluable. Through regular communication and cooperation, the school and UKIC ensure the comprehensive care and support of the student.

CONTACT DETAILS

There may be times that you need to contact us. We are always here to assist you with any requests or concerns that you may have. Any concerns you have will be taken seriously. You can contact in the following ways:

General enquiries	
Telephone (Monday to Friday: 09:00-17:00)	+44(0)7508118886
Email	info@primecolleges.co.uk
WeChat	PrimeArts
Emergencies 24/7	
Telephone	+44(0)7508118886
Safeguarding concerns	
Designated Safeguarding Lead Min ZHANG	+44(0)7508118886 Info@primecolleges.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Zhi XU	+44(0)7300012772 uk3@primecolleges.co.uk
Emergency Numbers in the UK (Free)	
Emergency: Police, Fire Brigade, Ambulance	999 (or 112)
Police (Non-Emergency)	101
NHS (National Health Service, Non-Emergency)	111

Keeping in touch

We will keep in regular contact with you throughout your stay in the UK to check that you are happy at school and with any homestay arrangements we have made for you. Please do talk to us if you have any questions, concerns or if you simply want to chat. We are here to help.

SAFEGUARDING

UKIC is committed to safeguarding and child protection. We have comprehensive policies on safeguarding, prevent / anti-radicalisation, low level concerns, complaints, anti-bullying, missing student, online safety, data protection that provide further information and outline our procedures. These can be found on our website www.primcolleges.co.uk.

We have a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead. You or your child can raise a safeguarding concern with your contact at the guardianship organisation or directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (contact numbers are included in the table above). Alternatively, you may wish to raise a concern directly with the school your child attends. All schools have their own Designated Safeguarding Lead. Please note that any concern that you or your child raise with us will be taken seriously and will be handled in line with our published procedures.

STATEMENT OF SERVICE

As your trusted guardian organisation, UKIC is committed to delivering a comprehensive and holistic range of services designed to ensure your child's seamless transition into UK education and facilitate their growth throughout their academic journey.

Pre-Arrival Services - Even before your child's journey begins, we offer assistance with visa applications, providing essential guardianship letters and supporting the visa procurement process. Our pre-departure counselling helps prepare your child for life in the UK, equipping them with an outbound bag of essential items and pre-activating a UK mobile SIM card to ensure immediate communication upon arrival.

Arrival Services - Upon arrival, we extend our services to include airport pick-up, school registration, medical registration, bank account opening, and more. These services are designed to ensure a smooth start to your child's UK educational experience.

Academic and Life Care - Throughout the academic year, we provide regular visitation and communication to assess your child's wellbeing and academic progress. Our role includes translating grade reports for parents, arranging extracurricular tutoring when necessary, and attending parent-teacher meetings on parents' behalf.

Emergency and Legal Support - UKIC offers 24/7 emergency contact services and immediate responses to any critical situations that may arise. We also provide legal aid in case of any disputes or issues that may occur at school.

Additional Services - We assist in other areas such as IELTS registration, birthday celebrations, study progression guidance, and facilitating parent visits to the UK. We also help arrange vacation plans, including travel, language training, tutoring courses, and homestays during holidays.

Legal Assistance - Our legal support is backed by the Stephenson Law, providing legal aid services for various school-related incidents.

Parental Responsibilities - We believe in a partnership with parents, who are expected to settle any service-related payments promptly and take responsibility for additional personal accident insurance for their child.

Our aim is to provide an all-encompassing support system for your child, facilitating their growth, learning, and wellbeing while studying in the UK. We're proud to serve as a trusted partner in your child's academic journey, and we strive to provide top-notch services to meet and exceed your expectations.

TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Ensuring the safety and convenience of students during their travels is a key priority at UKIC. We are committed to providing efficient and reliable transport arrangements throughout the academic year, including at the start/end of terms, half-terms, and exeats.

Airport Meet and Greet - Upon arrival in the UK, students will be greeted at the airport by our trusted representatives or Mr. Min Zhang, the Director of the company. They will help the student with their luggage, navigate through the airport, and transport them to their school or host family safely.

Transport Services - We utilise a network of professional drivers and reputable taxi services to ensure safe and comfortable travel for our students. If appropriate (with parent's permission only), we may also arrange for students to travel by train, particularly for longer journeys. We ensure that any travel arrangements are well-organised and communicated clearly to both parents and students in advance.

Organisation of Transport - Transportation for the start/end of terms, half-terms, exeats, and any additional necessary times is coordinated by UKIC. We keep track of the academic calendar and coordinate with schools and families to ensure timely and efficient transportation for all students.

Information from Parents - In order to facilitate these arrangements, we require some key information from parents:

- Detailed flight information, including flight numbers, arrival and departure times
- Any specific needs or requests regarding travel arrangements
- Confirmation of travel arrangements during half-terms and exeats

Parents should provide this information at least two weeks before the start of the term, or as soon as the information is available. Any changes to travel plans should be communicated immediately.

Please send all relevant information and updates to Mr. Min Zhang via email at info@primecolleges.co.uk or call him at +44(0)750811886. By maintaining open lines of communication, we can ensure a smooth and safe travel experience for your child throughout their time in the UK.

CHANGE OF PLAN

At UKIC, we understand that plans may sometimes need to change due to unexpected circumstances. In such cases, we request that parents inform us immediately about any modifications to the existing arrangements for exeats, half-terms, holidays, or other periods of homestay. Our aim is to accommodate these changes with as little disruption as possible.

If changes are made at least two weeks before the arranged stay, we will make every effort to adjust the plans accordingly and ensure a smooth transition. However, please note that there might be some constraints, and certain services might not be guaranteed due to the tight timeframe.

In the event of last-minute changes (less than two weeks before the arranged stay), the following procedures will apply:

1. **Notification:** Please inform Mr. Min Zhang, our Director, at the earliest. You can reach him via email at info@primecolleges.co.uk or call him at 0750811886.
2. **Arrangements:** We will do our best to accommodate your changes, but the success will largely depend on the availability of services and resources at that time. It might not always be possible to modify certain aspects, such as host family arrangements, transportation, etc., at short notice.
3. **Additional Costs:** Please be aware that any last-minute changes might incur additional costs due to potential logistical rearrangements. These costs would be communicated and would need to be agreed upon before implementing the changes.
4. **Emergency Situations:** In cases of emergency or unavoidable circumstances that require immediate changes, we will prioritise the safety and well-being of the student above all else and make necessary adjustments.

We highly encourage early communication of any potential changes to ensure we can provide the best care and support for your child during their stay in the UK. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

EMERGENCIES

UKIC will respond to any requests to provide emergency support and accommodation for students. For example, this could be due to a medical issue or suspension. Where possible the student will be placed with their usual homestay, but if this is not possible, they will be cared for by another homestay family who works for our organisation.

HOMESTAY ACCOMMODATION

UKIC have a number of host families with whom we place our students when schools are closed for half terms and exeat weekends. We will match your child as closely as possible to the family in terms of their experience, interests, and location. We try where possible to place your child in the same host family for all their stays, subject to availability.

All our host families meet the requirements set out by AEGIS(The Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students). Host families are inspected at least once a year by UKIC to ensure high standards are maintained. UKIC also undertake rigorous checks on each family, including with the national police database(Disclosure and Barring System or DBS).

Our host families will all have a kind disposition towards your child and are given guidelines and, where necessary, training from UKIC on the best practice when hosting an international student. This includes advice on Health and Safety matters but if you have any concerns whilst your child is staying with our host family, please let us know immediately.

Students are expected to respect their host family's way of life in return for being accepted as a family member. Hosts are encouraged to include students in family life and to arrange activities and excursions.

Please note, actual guardianship remains with UKIC during your child's stay with a host family, so you should speak to us about any concerns you may have or if you need to make any changes to the original arrangement.

Homestay Facilities

Our host families all live in well-maintained houses or flats, often with access to a garden. Students will be provided with their own comfortable bedroom (unless they have asked to share with a friend), storage facilities and a study area. Students will have access to the host's WiFi. Students usually share the bathroom with the host family but are occasionally provided with a private bathroom if staying in a superior homestay.

Students are welcome to join the family in the communal areas of the house. Students will be given 3 meals per day which are often eaten together with the family.

UPDATES ON STUDENT'S WELFARE AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Whilst at the school, your child's houseparent will take responsibility for academic progress and welfare, but there are times during the term and more importantly outside term time, when the school must be able to hand over these responsibilities to a properly appointed guardian. For example, exam weekends, half terms, medical emergencies, suspensions and exclusions.

During these times, we are your child's guide and support system while they study in the UK. We will oversee their welfare, academic progress, and overall experience.

Welfare Management: We ensure their well-being and safety throughout their stay. We coordinate with their schools, homestays, and other third parties to address any concerns or problems they might have. We also assist in medical emergencies, ensuring they receive the necessary care promptly.

Academic Support: We liaise with their school, track their academic progress, attend parents' evenings, and share termly reports with parents. We're here to help them navigate the school system and offer support and advice to help them achieve their academic goals.

Communication Bridge: We act as the communication bridge between you, your child, their school, and their homestay family. We ensure everyone is informed about their progress and welfare.

EXPENSES

School Expenses

All school-related expenses (e.g., educational trips, equipment, or additional fees) will be communicated to parents via email once the school issues an official payment notice. Parents are responsible for direct payment to the school as instructed. UKIC will not handle school fee transactions unless explicitly authorized in writing by the parents.

Homestay Expenses

● Homestay Booking Process

To book a host family, please provide us with all holiday arrangements and homestay requirements, as detailed as possible. We will then match your child with a suitable host family and send you a family profile for your approval. Once you have agreed, we will book the family according to the term dates provided by the school. If you are not happy with the host family choice, you will be asked to clarify the requirements and we will begin another search accordingly.

Homestay fees start at £80 per night and you will be notified of the exact fee when the homestay profile is sent to you. Please note that if a student leaves the homestay after 12pm on the last day, an additional night's fee will be charged.

If you would like us to arrange a taxi transfer for your child to the homestay/airport, please let us know when you confirm the host family.

Please note that we need as much time as possible to arrange homestay and transfers for students so please inform us of your child's holiday plans well in advance, at least 1 month before. This includes half terms, exam weekends, Christmas and Easter, as well as travel plans when they arrive in the UK and leave at the end of the year.

● Activity Expenses During Homestays

To address urgent or time-sensitive expenses (e.g., school collections, airport transfers, excursions) and mitigate communication delays due to time zone differences. Parents must pre-fund a Student Expense Account with a minimum balance of £500.

UKIC will use these funds to cover necessary and reasonable expenses if immediate parental consent cannot be obtained. A detailed expense report, including receipts and explanations, will be emailed to parents/guardians within 24 hours of any transaction.

Parents are required to replenish the account to the minimum balance within 7 working days after notification.

General Terms

UKIC acts solely as an intermediary for homestay bookings and urgent expense management. Final approval for all services rests with the parent. Failure to provide timely holiday plans or maintain the Student Expense Account balance may result in delays or additional charges.

LIFE IN THE UK

Living in the UK may be quite different to the life your child is used to. Every country has its own customs and it may take them a while to get used to these. Please do not worry, this is most normal. Here are a few examples of British customs to help you understand what is expected:

Meeting people: Sometimes British people come across as being reserved but usually they are kind, helpful and welcoming of visitors. British people usually greet each other with a handshake and use their title and surname, until being invited to use their first names. For example, when meeting a new contact, they may greet saying “Good morning Mr Harris”. Due to the coronavirus, greetings have changed, and handshakes are not currently being used. A verbal greeting is perfectly acceptable, whilst maintaining social distancing.

Queues: The British people love queues! When waiting their turn, for example in a shop, bank or for public transport, people form a line one behind the other so that they are served in turn. It is considered rude to push in. Due to the coronavirus, spaces between people waiting in the queue are currently larger, so please ensure that your child is aware of the need to maintain a suitable distance. In the UK this is currently 1 metre or more. Shops in the UK are currently limiting the number of people allowed inside at any one time, so your child may need to queue more often than in usual times. Some shops and services have clear instructions and markers to show where shoppers should stand. Please explain to your child that they should respect the instructions given.

Please and thank you: British people greatly appreciate politeness. This means when you would like something you would start a sentence with the word “Please”, for example, “Please may I have a sandwich?” When you have received something, you should always reply with “Thank you”.

Sorry! The British people are often heard to say “Sorry!” This word is used if people accidentally bump into each other or make a mistake. Often people say it even if they were not to blame (for example, a person bumped into them whilst walking in the street).

Mealtimes: It is considered polite to wait for all people at the table to have their meals in front of them before you start to eat. Knives and forks are used to eat the vast majority of main courses, although some British families may use other cutlery to suit the cuisine. Knives and forks are placed together to indicate that the diner has finished. It is not considered polite to eat with your mouth open or speak whilst eating. Similar to the beginning of the meal, diners usually wait until everyone is finished before leaving the table, and often time is spent having a chat around the table.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE HOMESTAY

UKIC expects all their students to be polite and courteous when staying with a homestay. A homestay is not a hotel and the expectation is that your child will be included as part of the family. As such, they will be expected to engage with family members, joining them at mealtimes, and possibly helping with chores such as laying the table. Your child’s homestay will explain their own house rules to them when they arrive. Please do ask them if you have any questions.

STUDENT FINANCES

Schools usually take care of pocket money for students. The housemasters/housemistresses will keep your student's pocket money safe and release funds to them when needed. Your child should not keep large amounts of cash in their room in case of theft.

Your child should not need to open a UK bank account, however we will help you set up a bank account and arrange credit cards for your child if required. To open an account they will need a “bank letter” from the school, their passport/ID and proof of address. If a bank card is lost or stolen, it must be reported to the bank immediately so they can cancel the card and send a new one.

Please contact us and we will be able to make the necessary arrangements.

LIABILITY

UKIC has a Student Behaviour Code of Conduct which students are expected to keep to at all times. The homestay provider and UKIC will not be liable for any conduct of the students.

More details about homestay accommodation and the services provided can be found in the Student Handbook.

RESPONSIBILITIES DURING A PANDEMIC

Pandemics can cause major disruption to travel and schooling. It is important in such events that UKIC takes advice from the government, UK Health Security Agency and the World Health Organisation. AEGIS also provides guidance for members to follow. This is regularly updated as a situation develops. Usually, in a pandemic it is important to restrict movement so as not to spread the disease further. That means boarding school students would usually remain at school. In the event of a pandemic UKIC may not be able to offer homestay accommodation for your child as this could place students, homestay families and the wider community at risk. UKIC will work with you to find flights to home countries where required. UKIC will work with schools to meet students' needs during a pandemic. This could be by helping to support students to learn remotely as directed by the school. UKIC will work with you and your child's school to find suitable quarantine accommodation for students where required. UKIC has a policy that outlines the procedures we are following during a pandemic.