

THE AEGIS STANDARD

Spring 2022

Catch up on the latest AEGIS news, including school and guardianship organisation member updates. We hope you enjoy reading!

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

It was great to see so many of you at the recent Safeguarding Update for Schools and Guardians in January. I hope that 2022 has started well and is going as smoothly as it can for you all considering the pandemic curve balls.

Since our training update, the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 consultation has arrived and we can see where safeguarding thoughts are heading. In the months ahead AEGIS will look to provide further training to support our members including training in online safety.

With the new National Standards for Boarding Schools (old NMS) due to be published soon, safeguarding is very much at the forefront of our minds. We will examine the implications that this has for schools, as well as for homestays. The AEGIS team is here to support our members to prepare for the future.

The AEGIS Quality Standards will certainly take into account all of the developing safeguarding considerations, and we will keep you abreast of any updates that may be required.

We hope that you all enjoy a productive and successful second half of term, and please rest assured that the AEGIS team will continue to work hard to support our member schools and guardianship organisations in any way that we can.



Adam Lubbock - Chair, AEGIS Board of Trustees

NEW MEMBERS

We love working with and supporting our member schools, and our community is continuing to grow. If you are a school reading this and you are not yet an AEGIS member then please do get in touch with Sophie Lindsay, via sophie@aegisuk.net.

New Member Schools since our last Newsletter in November 2021

- Bishopstrow College
- Bloxham School
- Cranleigh School
- David Game College
- Hazlegrove Preparatory School
- King's Bruton
- Malvern College
- Moor Park School
- Rye St Antony School
- Westonbirt School

A full list of AEGIS member schools can be found [here](#).



Newly Accredited Guardianship Organisations

Since our last newsletter we congratulate the following AEGIS members for passing accreditation:

New Preliminary Members

- Crown International Guardians
- Rize Discovery
- St George's Guardians

[Full List of Preliminary Accredited Guardianship Organisations](#)

[Full List of Gold Standard Accredited Guardianship Organisations](#)



We thank all of our new members and accredited organisations for your hard work and support!

AEGIS COVID-19 SAFE CHARTER



If you are a guardian and you would like to display the AEGIS Covid-19 Safe Charter logo, please do get in touch via info@aegisuk.net.

Upcoming events for UK secondary schools and guardianships:

ST / *alphe conferences*

ST Alphe Secondary Focus, London InPerson+
24th - 26th April 2022

ST Alphe UK InPerson+
2nd - 4th September 2022

ST Alphe Secondary Focus, Frankfurt InPerson+
30th September - 2nd October 2022

Early booking discounts available until 1st April 2022.

Book 2 events and the 3rd is FREE!

THE NEW BOARDING SCHOOL STANDARDS

What will they mean for guardianship?

The boarding school sector is still eagerly anticipating the publication by the DfE of the new Boarding School Standards. This document is yet to be issued, and there is continuing speculation as to the exact wording of updates and what they will mean to the sector.



Sophie Lindsay, School Membership Manager, AEGIS

One of the key changes proposed is a new standard which relates to educational guardianship. This document looks set to place greater focus on the quality of this vital service, as well as increased responsibility for schools in ensuring that guardianship standards are met both during term time and on breaks within the UK. The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly highlighted the importance of effective guardianship, and the disruption to education and international travel caused by the pandemic has led to students needing an unprecedented level of support with travel, homestays and indeed, pastoral care. The proposed changes will hopefully ensure more consistent care for students, with schools and guardians working more closely together to provide end-to-end support.

The current National Minimum Standards place responsibility on a school only for educational guardians they have appointed. However, it looks likely that the new Standards will extend this duty of care to the quality of all guardians, even if schools have had no hand in the selection process. This is likely to prompt schools to tighten up their guardianship requirements, and many are already taking measures such as asking parents to select companies that are AEGIS accredited, in order to ensure that a satisfactory level of due diligence has been done. Schools are also requesting that guardians be appointed far earlier in the admissions process, so that this vital decision is considered in a measured and timely way, and ensuring that good quality support is in place before CAS is issued.

There has long been an uneasiness about the idea of schools providing their own guardianship to pupils. It has been argued that effective safeguarding requires independent support, and indeed that such arrangements represent a potential conflict of interest.

Effective safeguarding for international students is at the heart of good guardianship, and the sector is therefore looking forward to these changes, which will help to tighten up guidelines, and ensure that children receive the highest possible levels of support both in and outside of school. The boarding school experience of an overseas student in the UK is not just limited to time spent inside the school gates. Exeats, holidays and travel make up a key part of the boarding school journey, and the new Standards will hopefully help ensure that schools and guardians work together to support this experience as a whole.

"AEGIS has been involved in the consultation process for the new Boarding School Standards, and we have lobbied to ensure that the vital importance of guardianship is recognised. We hope that the final version will reflect these efforts, and that the new Standards will help ensure better and clearer guidelines for all parties."

Yasemin Wigglesworth, CEO, AEGIS



member school committed to safe guardianship

If you are a school and are not yet a member of AEGIS and would like more information then do [get in touch.](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND THE PANDEMIC

The Importance of Self-Care in Supporting Positive Mental Health



Jennifer Scarfe, AEGIS Trustee

We are now in a new phase; Covid is still with us but impacts less on our day-to-day life than it did 18 months ago. One of the key things that has become apparent, in my day-to-day dealings with young people and their families, is the importance and potential impact that the caregiver's state of mind can have upon those in their charge. This too can be applied to house staff and host families.

Just as babies are reliant upon their main caregiver, to modulate the world around them to meet their needs, young people need those who care for them to be emotionally available to hear them and try to understand what their behaviours might be communicating. Now, more than ever, young people need the adults around them to provide a containing space, in which they feel understood and safe, in light of the ongoing changes and resultant uncertainty.

The pandemic has engendered many difficult experiences, including bereavement, isolation, and fear, triggering a wave of new mental health conditions as well as exacerbating existing ones. It is easy to assume that young people are 'naturally resilient' and will 'bounce back quickly' but statistics indicate that this is not true for all.

Good quality sleep and nutrition, meaningful connections, along with regular exercise, are considered key foundational activities that support a healthy physical and emotional life. In our bid to support those we care for there is the perennial danger of self-neglect. Not recognising and honouring the importance of these activities can sabotage our ability to contain young people's anxieties and respond appropriately.

The analogy of putting on your own oxygen mask before helping another has never been more relevant; paying heed to this advice should stand you in good stead.

Whilst waiting lists are unquestionably long, there is a wealth of support available, accessible either through your GP or some of the sources listed below.

For further help and advice:

[Mind Ed for Families](#)

[Mind](#)

[Youth Access](#) (search by postcode)

For schools:

[Place 2 Be](#)

[Mentally Healthy Schools](#)

Jennifer Scarfe was Deputy Head Pastoral and DSL until August 2020. She is now in her final year of pre-clinical training, whilst working in CAMHS, and hopes to start her doctoral training in Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy in October.

TOP TIPS FOR SETTLING INTO A BRITISH BOARDING SCHOOL

Travelling thousands of miles to join a British boarding school is a huge adjustment for our international students; culturally, socially and academically, and it is a key responsibility of parents, agents and schools to make sure that children are ready for this huge life-change. Educational guardians are vital to this process, and for an AEGIS-accredited guardianship organisation, helping students settle in and adjust is a fundamental part of their role. Talk Education have highlighted some key elements of British boarding school life to consider.

British boarding schools are widely considered to be some of the best in the world. They're packed with shiny facilities, offer extraordinary co-curricular opportunities, have brilliant teachers to help your child fulfil their academic potential and pastoral care is second to none. Little wonder, then, that there are currently almost 25,000 non-British pupils (with parents living overseas) attending independent schools in the UK.

Settling into a brand-new school can be overwhelming, but what if you're moving from abroad at the same time? There are new friends to be made, new foods to try, new weather to get to grips with and a totally new culture to navigate. If you're thinking about applying to a British boarding school from overseas, or if you've already secured a place and you're gearing up for the big move, here's what to expect and how to make the settling-in process as smooth as possible.



Get ahead before you arrive

With any luck, you'll have already visited your new school in person and had a proper look around the campus well ahead of your first day. Spend the days and weeks before your arrival absorbing the joining information and welcome packs provided by the school, and take a good look at their Instagram or Twitter pages.

Packing tips

Ahead of your arrival, you'll be sent a uniform and kit list. Some items will be compulsory, but if you can't get hold of everything, don't panic. Don't overpack. You won't have as much storage space in your dorm or bedroom as you're used to at home, and you'll be in school uniform from Monday to Friday. Most boarders change into their own clothes in the evenings after lessons are over. And crucially, make sure you name tape or label all of your belongings – you'll be living in a house with lots of others, so it's easy for clothes to get lost.

Make sure you bring some personal items to decorate your dorm and remind you of home. You might want to pack your own duvet cover, posters, photos or fun touches such as bunting. Some items can help break the ice and strike up conversations with fellow pupils. If you have any favourite spices or sauces from your own country (depending on customs restrictions), you might want to bring those, not least to let your new friends taste them. And don't forget a travel adaptor!

The practicalities

Moving away from home means you'll need to become a little more independent and take on more responsibilities. International students are often invited to arrive a few days before the start of term, so there's plenty of time to sort out practicalities.

It's unlikely you will ever be asked for payments for expenses and optional extras directly (these are usually added to the bill for your parents or guardian), but make sure you bring a small amount of pocket money to spend in the tuck shop or during weekend trips into town. Houseparents usually look after the money for younger students, which helps with budgeting and security.

For older students, it's a good idea to open a UK bank account. This means that you won't need to keep large sums of money on your person and can withdraw it at a suitable time.

Staying in touch

When you're living abroad, staying in touch with home becomes more important than ever. It is worth setting up a UK mobile phone so you can easily communicate with friends and family. Each school has its own rules about phones and electronic devices, so check before you arrive. To avoid disruption in lessons, pupils are usually only allowed to use their phones during set times of the day. Most schools provide pupils with their own email address, which you can use to contact home. There will usually be plenty of computers available to use Skype or Zoom, and some prep schools still uphold the rather lovely tradition of weekly letter writing. It's easy to get swept up in all the exciting things happening at school – but do take the time to check in with home every now and then.

Settling in and dealing with homesickness

It's completely normal to miss home, and while some pupils settle quickly, others need a little more time. The good news is there'll be a large team on hand to help you settle in. '

Boarding houseparents and staff have years of experience of looking after pupils, and they'll always be your first port of call if you have any concerns. A matron will help with laundry, minor health issues and more; house staff are there to tackle any pastoral issues; and academic tutors will keep an eye on your academic progress. New students are also often buddied up with an older pupil, who will act as a valuable role model and be able to answer any questions. If you're struggling with homesickness, our advice is to get involved with as much as you can. Say yes to as much as possible and do things you've never done before. Get outside and kick a football around with your new housemates; join a club or society; or have a go at whipping up your favourite dish for your friends in the house kitchen

What happens at evenings and weekends?

It's safe to say there won't be many dull moments. 'On most days, the school will offer between 30 to 60 extracurricular activities, and within our first few weeks of arriving at school, boarders are treated to cinema trips, shopping expeditions, paintball sessions, karaoke nights and house quiz evenings,' says Fraser Drewar, a houseparent at Stonyhurst College in Lancashire. Weekends are just as jam-packed. Some schools have lessons on Saturday mornings; others offer enrichment programmes and dedicate afternoons to sports matches and events. There'll be plenty of opportunity for some well-deserved downtime too, and Sundays tend to take on an altogether slower rhythm, with late breakfasts and the chance to catch up on schoolwork.

And some final words of advice...

'Do your best to make the most of all the activities, knowledge and experiences that are available to you. Doing so will enable you to create memories that stay with you throughout your lifetime,' says Mr Drewar.

Settling into a UK boarding school can be a daunting time, but once you get into the swing of things, you're likely to have some of the best years of your life. Good luck – and, most importantly, have fun!



Talk Education's dynamic digital schools and nurseries guide provides the highest-quality information and guidance on the independent education system, giving parents a unique behind-the-scenes view of private schools across the globe. The expert, on-the-ground team at Talk Education has a combined total of more than 175 years' experience of visiting schools, as well as unparalleled contacts with school leaders. With their parent-advisory service and educational events programme, they offer a one-stop education shop, helping parents find the right school for their child – whether locally or internationally.

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BISHOPSTROW COLLEGE

Preparing International Students for UK Boarding Schools – Some Perspectives from our new Principal, Mario Di Clemente

After a welcome and restful Christmas with my family, I took up my new post as Principal of Bishopstrow College with the familiar mix of enthusiasm and determination. How reassuring that no matter at what stage we find ourselves in our careers – I'm a 50-something in my third headship – a new role such as this can feel as exciting as the very first. We are an independent international boarding school for 7-17-year-olds and we prepare our students for a British boarding education. But more than that, we are a community of young people, teachers, boarding and support staff who know how fortunate we are to be treading the same path together, particularly those of us who are new. Trepidation and nervousness at first, eventually replaced by confidence, camaraderie and a welcome feeling of home-from-home.

My first impression of Bishopstrow one month into my tenure is that we achieve this through creating common and achievable goals as well as a culture of international and mutual respect and cooperation; and here's the thing – those goals are only in part academic. Of course, with hard work and dedication, a student's English Language will improve and their knowledge of other subjects will grow, but for us it is also about growing and developing as young global citizens in a way that will prepare them not just for their next boarding school but most definitely for life beyond and wherever that may take them. There are Five Virtues at Bishopstrow which help us achieve this: Be Kind, Hardworking, Polite, Organised and a Team Player. The fact that I saw them all in action within hours of arriving in January, and that like all the greatest of virtues promoted in schools they should retain their relevance indefinitely, convinces me that international boarding schools, like Bishopstrow, have a very special part to play in influencing lives as well as learning.



LVS ASCOT

Life for boarders at LVS Ascot encompasses a warm, welcoming community where friendships and positive attitudes are nurtured in an environment that fosters academic excellence and healthy, happy, self-motivated individuals. With a strong overseas student intake, LVS Ascot is committed to providing a breadth and depth of learning and life skills to fully equip each child for the years ahead.

Thai brothers, Jaturapat and Pattarapon came to LVS Ascot five years ago, aged nine-and-a-half and eight years old respectively, having attended the highly prestigious Regents International School Pattaya in Thailand. With British schools lauded as the best in the world and with the boys' parents keen for them to develop multi-cultural friendships, LVS Ascot was an obvious choice for them, especially with its reputation for supporting young students from abroad.

Overseas pupils at LVS Ascot are supported by their guardian – in addition to the qualified team of housemasters/mistresses and assistants – which the parents hoped would help the boys with homesickness.

Their guardian, Warin, explained: "In the beginning they didn't understand the English culture, but the boarding staff recognised their difficulties and ensured they made friends and settled into their new lives quickly. As their guardian, I represent their parents and also manage regular updates home." She continued: "At first, they used to stay with me twice a month at weekends to help them adapt and also to give them the chance to speak Thai with me. I remain here to provide additional support as and when they need it."

Jaturapat and Pattarapon have thrown themselves into life as boarders, enthusiastically taking advantage of the excellent sporting facilities, after school activities and state-of-the-art technology.



Pattarapon bouldering at a local climbing centre

The boys added that the diverse culture and personalities at school have given them confidence to make friends; while growing up as part of the LVS Ascot family has provided valuable life lessons, teaching them to be independent and prepared for their lives ahead, either here in Britain or in their home country .



Jaturapat playing dodgeball on Friday evenings – during electronic downtime



LVS Ascot



RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

Ali Da Costa, Head of Boarding

The Pandemic threw some incredible curveballs at boarding schools and Ratcliffe College was no exception. Despite the fear that the whole world was feeling, we found silver linings in lockdown - the biggest being the reminder to 'Stop. Breathe. Talk. Listen'.

Naturally we felt fortunate to be locked in with incredible facilities. Initially we were enthusiastic at the prospect of "a bit of time off" to go swimming, have remote-control car races and massive games of Footgolf. Although those activities remained important, eventually we started to reflect. Once we realised that some boarders weren't going to get home at all, and as death-rates rose, we realised that the most important thing was the people we cared about, and we started to take time to talk to one other.

I remember sitting in a circle looking at a group I thought I knew well and asking them to take turns to tell me three things they liked about themselves. If you have never asked teenagers to openly say nice things about themselves, you have never seen a true 'squirm'. After discussing how easy it would have been to tell me things they didn't like about themselves and how sad that is, everyone began to open up. In that moment, I learned more about my boarders than I had in a year. I realised that in the day-to-day running of life we had lost the time to sit in a circle and open up to one another.



Open Morning at Ratcliffe College, Leicester, UK - [Book your place now!](#)



"I'm going to miss everyone. I loved every single moment of it. I got to help everyone with their English and I never got told off for speaking my own language."

Jemima, England

BUCKSWOOD OVERSEAS SUMMER SCHOOL (BOSS)

Five Reasons to Learn English in the UK this Easter

Here at Buckswood Overseas Summer School (BOSS), we have had a lot of students and staff who have experienced both our Spring Course and our Summer School who when asked, 'what is the Spring Course like?' will simply answer. 'It's like Summer School. But different,' and they're right. But what makes it different?

It is cheaper than summer school

Everybody knows that things are more expensive when demand is high. Trains are more expensive during rush hour and flights too during school holidays. It is the same with our courses.

The weather is colder than during the summer

Believe it or not, during summer school, students constantly complain that they are too hot! Summer 2018 was so hot in fact that we had students from Saudi Arabia, where the weather can be over 50°C in summer, complaining that they were too hot and one day in 2019, the temperature hit 37°C!

Our Spring Course is more intimate

During the summer, we typically have 200 students per week but during spring we usually have less than 100. This means that students are able to get to know each other much better and the staff to student ratio is higher offering our students more opportunities to interact and practise their English.

The overall level of English is higher

Most students who attend our Spring Course are bi-lingual and already speak English fluently. This is because we usually have students from bi-lingual schools in Bangkok and Dubai.

There are fewer tourists

With less traffic on the roads, we can get to places faster and spend more time sightseeing, and with fewer people at tourist attractions, queues are smaller!



Please visit www.buckswoodsummerschool.com or contact summerschool@buckswood.co.uk for more information.



RUTHIN SCHOOL

Ruthin School brings home top Oxbridge offers

Ruthin School is delighted that four Upper Sixth students have been given offers to study at Oxford and Cambridge Universities next year. Summer will be reading Mathematics at St. Hugh's College, Oxford, while Sithika is looking forward to studying Mathematics and Computer Science at Wadham College, Oxford. With an average of ten applicants per place for Mathematics and Computer Science, and nine applicants per place for Mathematics, receiving an offer is a great achievement.

Leonardo has an offer to read Natural Sciences at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and his classmate Sabrina will be heading to Robinson College, Cambridge, to read Mathematics. Places at Cambridge are equally competitive, with only 11% of applicants being made an offer for Mathematics, and for 15% for Natural Sciences.

Sue Frencham, Head at Ruthin School, says: "We are so proud of our Upper Sixth students this year. Despite having to study a good proportion of their A levels remotely, potentially 1000s of miles away from the school, they have thrived nonetheless and demonstrated their true talents to Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Offers are flying in from the very best institutions for all our students and we never cease to be amazed at our students' resilience and brilliance in achieving excellence despite the pressures of a global pandemic."

A further five Ruthin students for Cambridge and three for Oxford had been invited to interview, following a good performance in the fiendishly difficult Admissions Assessments. Our motto of 'Study, Thrive, Succeed' runs through the heart of the school and is synonymous with academic success. Year on year, students achieve exceptional results to confirm acceptance at top universities in the UK and around the world. On average, 86% of our Upper Sixth students move on to study at Russell Group institutions. Ruthin School is an independent co-educational boarding school, offering day, weekly and full boarding experiences for students aged 11 to 19. Located in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it prides itself on being inclusive and nurturing.



Visit [Ruthin School website](https://www.ruthinschool.co.uk) or email admissions@ruthinschool.co.uk

AEGIS MEMBER SCHOOLS NEWS



ETHERTON EDUCATION

Etherton Education are delighted to confirm their 2022 Residential Academic Summer Courses. Etherton Education summer courses are designed to prepare international students for studying in British boarding schools. The courses are academic with English for Education as their main focus. The 2022 courses include:

Pre-A-Level / Pre-IB Course at Lord Wandsworth College, Hampshire. For students aged 15-17 years who are preparing to study A-Levels or the International Baccalaureate. Students take compulsory English and Drama, and choose three to five additional subjects from: Maths, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, History, Geography, Business Studies and Economics, Art and Design, ICT/Computing and Psychology. There are also evening workshops in Further Maths and Theory of Knowledge.

Pre-GCSE Course at Queen's College, Taunton (new location for 2022). For students aged 13-15 years who are preparing to study GCSEs. Students follow a busy academic timetable, including English, Drama, Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, ICT / Computing, Business Studies, Art, History and Geography.

Junior Academic Course at Queen's College, Taunton (new location for 2022). For students aged 10-12 years, combining hard work with lots of active learning and fun. Students follow an academic timetable, including English, Drama, Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography, Art, ICT and Life Skills.

Alongside their academic studies, Etherton Education also work on the personal development of each student's 'soft skills'. These include confidence, teamwork, leadership, communication, creativity and integration. Each course features one full day trip each week, with an additional half day trip on the Junior Academic Course. There is an hour of sport each teaching day, along with Social Activities and Sunday Clubs. A team of Student Hosts work every day to help provide up to 50 hours of extra social English practice every week.



Etherton Education courses all have a full-time timetable to get a completely immersive boarding school experience

TAUNTON SCHOOL

Student case study



“My name is Tricey from Ghana and I was one of the first students to complete the International Foundation Year at Taunton School. Taunton School has a multicultural environment that caters to the needs of every single person. Studying in Taunton School has given me the opportunity to participate in different co-curricular activities such as netball, hockey, yoga and arts. Overall, the one thing I’d say is that the quality of facilities at Taunton School is astonishing.

At Taunton School, a massive emphasis is placed on the wellbeing of students. For instance, activities such as trips are organised on the weekends to help students integrate. Being in a boarding house at Taunton School has been one of the best decisions I have made by far. Even though I have not been able to see my family for quite some time, the support and encouragement provided by Taunton School has been amazing.

“The thing that really appealed to me about the Foundation course was the fact that it was really business-focused and it provided me a clear pathway for studying at university – and the fact that you get a guaranteed place at one of over 50 universities over the world when you pass. The English for Academic Purposes (EAP) element gives me an advantage over people who follow the normal A-level pathway, as I have been taught how to write university-standard essays and coursework. It was also great to be able to get involved in extra-curricular activities while on the course – I got to play cricket, take part in The Duke of Edinburgh Award and I also organized charity events and volunteered in forest management.

I cannot wait to begin the next step of my academic journey at the University of Kent, and I don’t believe I would have received my offers without the help and assistance from my teachers at Taunton School.”

www.tauntonschool.co.uk



TEN GARDEN EDUCATION GROUP GUARDIANSHIPS

Providing international students with a pastoral and emotional development break from school

Over the course of the pandemic, guardian providers such as Ten Garden have had to come up with innovative solutions to keep their students happy and safe. Because of complications with international travel- the lack of direct flights and constantly-shifting rules regarding testing, some of our students had not been home to China for a very long time and by October of 2021, we were concerned that they may be beginning to feel homesick and despondent. To complicate matters further, host families were hesitant about accepting students over the October half term break.

With all this in mind, we decided to treat our students to something special: we arranged a camp in one of the UK's most scenic areas- the Cotswolds. This involved renting a cottage on an organic farm and creating an environment and schedule that our students would find both stimulating and homely. Our daily programme involved a study time in the mornings, followed by a hike in the afternoons. The students enjoyed wandering around quintessentially English villages or exploring lively market towns. Since the half term break was close to Halloween, we visited a pumpkin farm, where the students chose pumpkins they would later carve into individually designed jack-o'-lanterns. We prearranged a trick-or-treat route for them with friendly local families, who were happy to hand out sweets when our students, wearing their costumes, knocked on their doors. To give them a taste of home, we ensured that each day, our students were fed with delicious, home-cooked Chinese dishes.



The experience, while not being a substitute for a journey home to family, provided our students with a pastoral and an emotional development break from school, and not only did they enjoy it immensely, they returned to their respective schools feeling refreshed and recharged.



Ten Garden
天嘉教育

让监护落到实处，而非一纸文件！

ACADEMIC FAMILIES

Whilst most of her peers travelled home to Japan when the pandemic hit, Yoko faced the 'hardest decision of her life' as we offered to match her with a host family willing to support her if she wanted to stay for lockdown. Focused on her Cambridge preparation, Yoko was determined to improve her English so knew she must stay.

She bonded with the host family instantly and they made the most of their intense time together including online choir, yoga and becoming a surprising snooker aficionado!

None of us could have foreseen how long Yoko would stay nor the mutual benefits her stay would result in. Her hosts are an active, retired couple and they particularly enjoyed the focus she brought to their lockdown lives and the joy they felt knowing they were making a difference when their world had shrunk so much.

Yoko's lockdown experience paid off as her language and cultural assimilation accelerated beyond all expectation. She's now living her Cambridge dream and like UK students, she pops 'home' to her 'second' family whenever she wants and enjoyed Christmas back in her old lockdown bedroom.



Although her guardianship ended, Yoko always knew that none of us would 'finish' with her and her hosts continue to provide fantastic support and encouragement.

It isn't a one-sided relationship though as Yoko shares her continuing journey instilling great pride, respect and deep affection from her host 'parents' who are very much invested in her success and happiness and probably will always keep in regular contact and have been known to say 'hosting isn't just for Christmas – it's for life!'

Their bond is a testament to the nature of our hosts and also to our students' willingness to muck in. We're proud to foster such valuable relationships and are excited to see Yoko's continued success.



BRIGHT WORLD GUARDIANSHIPS

Host family survey - the results are in

We have grown to realise over the years that, for our students, staying in a host family for their boarding school holidays is the most popular choice. Our host families tend to stay with us year on year once they have been through the inspection process at the beginning of our relationship.

We wanted to find out why, and recently polled our host families to see what it is about hosting that is so enjoyable for them. The results are in and we have had some lovely feedback from our hosts.

They enjoy organising activities together

Lisa McGowan is a host family for Bright World. She really gets involved in activities with the students and got them pumpkin carving at Halloween. Lisa also hosted students in her very large and comfortable home for Christmas 2021, when so many were unable to return home due to travel restrictions.

They love getting to know students better

Tracey D'Cruz really enjoys the entire experience of hosting and welcoming our students into her home during the holiday times. She is particularly happy that not only can she help her students to enjoy their holidays but, in turn, they provide her and her family with such an interesting role. They love getting to know students and learning all about their different cultures.



Happy Students enrich our lives

Joan Downs, one of Bright World's longstanding host families says that having young people staying with them in their home is an absolute joy. The family enjoys talking with their students and hearing about their country and home life. Joan says that they encourage them to take part in their everyday activities such as planning and cooking meals, playing music and going for walks with them around the local area.

"Whilst we encourage our students to be part of our everyday life, we are conscious that they have school work to complete which we encourage and facilitate. Happy students enrich our lives."

Joan Downs



bright world

AEGIS MEMBER GUARDIANSHIP ORGANISATION NEWS

JENKINS ENTERPRISES

I have been a guardian for 3 years in the UK and only recently joined AEGIS in 2021. The pandemic has presented far more challenges in supporting international students than ever before.

During one particularly difficult situation, I contacted Sharon Sverdlhoff in the AEGIS office, never having had to address such issues for guidance before. Sharon emailed me almost immediately, and told me she was going to contact Yasemin Wigglesworth even though it was her day off. I suddenly felt supported and no longer alone with this challenge. Yasemin both emailed me and then followed it up with a phone call to offer support and guidance.

During the phone call Yasemin further offered to discuss the options with the school directly but I refused. I wished to use the information sent to me by Yasemin from AEGIS to resolve the situation myself.

This immediate and overwhelming support from AEGIS was unexpected and totally welcome as I navigated these troubled waters. The information and support provided from AEGIS helped enormously, and the situation was resolved to everyone's satisfaction.



UK SCHOOLS

"This immediate and overwhelming support from AEGIS was unexpected and totally welcome."

Maryna Jenkins – Jenkins Enterprises

PIPPA'S GUARDIANS

As Christmas 2021 approached, many international students found themselves in a similar situation to Christmas 2020; unable to travel home and be with their families. Those who could travel, were faced with long and expensive periods of quarantine which made going home impossible.

As Pippa's Guardians is experienced in running holiday camps, we organised a Christmas camp in Cheltenham, offering students a safe and secure solution for their Christmas break.

Students from across the country, from all schools and guardianship organisations, were welcomed to the camp which offered a blend of study for upcoming mock examinations, as well as enjoyable activities, including climbing, kayaking, pottery painting, music, sports and social events.

We offered an English Christmas experience, featuring our own Christmas service in the school Chapel, with carols and readings from students which were filmed and shared with parents so that they could also feel involved. Students also decorated their own Christmas stockings and took part in a 'secret santa' giving and receiving gifts to and from their campmates.



Parents were grateful and reassured that their child had a safe and enjoyable plan for their holiday.



"I would like to thank you and the team for taking care of my daughter. She returned to School safely yesterday and starts her new school term today. I must say the camp was very well managed and offered a balanced timetable – revision/ self study in the morning followed by a choice of sports/arts activities in the afternoon. I am very glad that my daughter could maintain a disciplined and healthy routine during her term break."

May Chan

"Thank you so much for offering a perfectly Christmas Camp for children who are unable to go back to home. I appreciated the opportunities your team and you providing such a fantastic Christmas holiday"

Lucia Zhang





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