

Host Family Handbook

Academic Year
2021-2022



Dippa's 
Guardians



Welcome

We would like to welcome you to Pippa's Guardians as part of our friendly and professional team, caring for our students while they are here studying in the UK. The role the host family plays is vital in the successful running of our business and our working relationship with you is extremely important to us. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students and expect all our staff, host families and working partners to share this commitment.

This handbook is designed to explain the work we do and to set out your responsibilities within that. We aim to share our knowledge and experience in working with overseas students with you, so that you are well prepared when they arrive and you know what to expect.

For twenty four years we have been caring for international students. Our family run company was established in 1997 by Pippa Hughes. The company is now run by Ben Hughes, her son, from our headquarters in Malvern, Worcestershire.

Ben is also on the committee of The Association for the Education and Guardianship for International Students (AEGIS), the regulatory body that governs our industry and whose principles we uphold. In Malvern we have a wonderful team who provide support for all of our students and our host families. We are the educational guardians to all our students whilst they are studying here in the UK and we work closely with the boarding schools to ensure their pastoral and educational welfare. We also look after their travel requirements and are responsible for the students at all times when they are not in the care of their schools.

We have a team of Area Managers who meet the students and their families when they arrive in the UK and continue to visit and support them throughout their school life. Your Area Manager will be your direct contact with Pippa's Guardians and they are on hand to offer advice and support.

For further information please do visit:

www.pippasguardians.co.uk

Ben Hughes
Managing Director



Looking after our students

Becoming a host family is a wonderful experience, the opportunity to really make a difference to overseas students while they are studying here in the UK, providing them with a home away from home experience. It is a unique opportunity to learn about different cultures and to extend the hand of friendship and hospitality across the globe. It is the opportunity to make a real difference to the life of a young person while they are studying away from home. Many of our host families form lifelong friendships with our students and their families and stay in touch even after they have left school for university. The students really do become part of the family which is both life-enriching and enormous fun!

With your help, support and guidance, our students can flourish and enjoy studying here in the UK. Our parents are also extremely grateful for the care and support they and their children receive from our host families. It is a highly rewarding and worthwhile thing to do and many of our hosts say they feel it is an immense privilege.

It is also a vital part of what we do at Pippa's Guardians. Our host families offer students a warm and comfortable home environment, time out from school for students to relax, rest or revise and the opportunity to experience family life here in the UK. Host families provide a fantastic support for our students and we simply could not offer the quality of service and high levels of care, without them. Our wonderful host families see the students as an extension of their own families, they will keep in touch with them at school, collect them for holidays, and provide opportunities to take part in activities and visits. The students in turn like to return to the same host family throughout their time whilst studying in the UK. Your decision to become

a host family for Pippa's Guardians means you are now a crucial part of the support system surrounding our students.

When our students come to stay with you, we would like you to treat them as a part of the family and care for them as if they are your own children.

Studying in the UK can be a very daunting experience for our students at first. Our students, who are aged between seven and nineteen, are getting used to the rigours of studying at boarding school, in a new language and having to share their living space with students they have only just met. We usually find that by exeat time or half term, they are feeling much more at home and secure in their new environment. Staying with a host family is an important part of helping them to feel comfortable with their new lives.

Of course, not all students are nervous or find it difficult, but it does help to empathise with the challenges they are facing. By the time they come to stay with you, any homesickness they have experienced will usually have settled down and they are looking forward to meeting new people. They may, however, still be very shy. It is a very individual thing, but your experienced Area Manager will have a good understanding of the students they are placing with you, and this will ensure things run smoothly, especially for the first visit. Staying with a host family should be a wonderful experience for our students – we ask you to provide a secure and relaxing environment for them, with all the care and attention, fun and discipline you would give your own children and in return you can build a marvellous relationship with them and make a real difference to their lives and the quality of their experience while studying here.

With older students who may have already had experience of boarding and of visiting host families, the challenge can be managing their expectations and

greater independence, which we cover later in the section **Staying home alone and going out**. Obviously age appropriate activities are an important part of what you provide as a host family as well as a secure, happy, safe and welcoming environment during their time in your home.

Through your Area Manager, it may be possible to make contact with your student before you meet for the first time. Your student and their family will have seen your profile and know what you look like. We will also provide you with a student profile, so that you know as much as possible about the student you are looking after. A warm welcome makes a very big difference to a student's first impression.

Please show the student around your home and introduce them to all the members of your family – including any pets you may have!

The reaction to pets from students of different cultural backgrounds is sometimes negative – many of our Chinese students for example are simply not used to having pets, but with careful management of the introductions, they more often than not very quickly learn to love playing with any pets you may have in your family home.



How to ensure hosting your student goes smoothly

Setting the ground rules at the start

Our students feel happiest and most secure when they know what is expected of them, especially in a new situation, such as arriving at the host family house. We know from talking with our students, that simple rules regarding when to use the shower, what snacks or food they may help themselves to, what to do with laundry, or how to address you, can help them to feel settled more quickly. You can even write them a list of your house rules – this helps if they are shy, as they don't have to keep asking. Just like the boarding house at school where there will be a strict code of conduct and rules regarding behaviour, it is better to be clear and to let the student know if they do something that is not acceptable. If you find they do not respond to this or that you cannot make them understand, please call us and we will help you.

Students are not expected to be treated as hotel guests when staying in your home – we expect them to be polite, to offer to clear the table after their meals, fill the dishwasher or wash up after themselves and to keep their room clean and tidy and make their bed. We expect them to be respectful in the rest of your house. You do not have to issue the student with a key unless they are over 18 and then we leave this to your discretion.

Cultural differences and student behaviour

Our students are usually extremely polite, well behaved and want very much to fit in with our host families. Sometimes, however, they may appear rude or unsociable because they may stay in their room for long

periods of time and do not assimilate themselves into family life as much as the host family would like. In this case, host families may feel that they have done something to upset the students, or that the student is not happy in their care. This is usually not so, it is simply the way some of our students are. Some have a huge workload and will need to study a lot and others make the most of a break from their busy schedule at school, where they are usually up very early and busy all the time. Like normal teenagers, they want to relax, sleep and do very little! Over time, those students that are reticent to mix, usually do so as they get to know the family. Please give it time. If you are worried about the behaviour of your student, please contact your Area Manager or our Head Office immediately.

Homesickness – how to help

By the time our students come to stay with you, they will have been in school for a few weeks and hopefully any homesickness will have settled down. Homesickness affects the majority of our students in one way or another when they come to study in the UK. It can be a combination of many factors, including a new environment, meeting a huge number of new people in a short space of time and of course adapting to the differences in culture, language, time zone, food etc. Added to this, our students are separated from their families and friends at home, quite often for the very first time in their lives. Usually they adapt quickly and with the help of their caring, supportive house parents and teachers in school, as well as the team at Pippa's Guardians, they learn to deal with any homesickness they are experiencing. If they are still experiencing homesickness while staying with you, there are lots of ways you can help. Make your student aware that you know homesickness is a normal experience and explain to them it will pass and get easier over time.

1. Make sure your student knows that you are understanding, sympathetic, and always there to talk to.
2. Encourage them to keep in touch with home and suggest they have familiar things around them; including photographs from home or any belongings with personal meaning.
3. Help the student to find familiar food – encourage them to cook their own recipes or plan meals together.
4. Encourage your student to be busy and active – taking regular exercise really does help.
5. Making friends with other international students is a good support mechanism and even better if you are hosting more than one student.

If you feel your student is homesick and they open up to you this is a tremendous achievement as they must feel very comfortable with you.

If you have any concerns

From the outset, your student will have been chosen specifically for you and your family and therefore problems rarely occur. When our students come to stay with you, your Area Manager will be in touch early on to check that everything is going well. This is your opportunity to bring up any problems you are experiencing. Very occasionally, and it is extremely rare, students will not settle with their host family and are not happy, and vice versa. In this case, your Area Manager will act as your intermediary to find out the reasons why and to try to resolve the situation. In rare cases we will move a student if the problem is a valid one, in full consultation with the student, the host family and their parents or educational agent.

Standards of accommodation

It is an AEGIS requirement that each student has their own bedroom wherever possible, unless they have chosen to share with a sibling, friend or host family child of the same sex. While at boarding school, many students are required to share a dormitory with several other students and for them to have their own space, even for a weekend, is very important.

The room for your student should be warm, decorated, clean and tidy. It should have a permanent bed, a chest of drawers, a wardrobe for their clothes, mirror and a bedside table with a lamp. The room should also have a desk and good lighting, as they are likely to want to study while staying with you. If this is not possible, then please ensure there is a quiet place elsewhere in your house for the student to study. Students are expected to make their bed and keep their room clean and tidy.

During the application process, your Area Manager will have already inspected all the rooms in your house. If you decide for whatever reason to change the designated bedroom for your student, please contact your Area Manager to discuss this with them.

Bathroom facilities must be lockable, please let the student know what time is best for them to use it if it is a shared bathroom. Please supply your student with clean bedding, towels and any toiletries they may need and let them know what to do with their laundry when they need to have their clothing washed.

It is an expected part of caring for your student, that you will wash their clothes as necessary. Any dry cleaning the student may require is an extra and should be charged for on the claim form under additional expenses.

Food glorious food

This usually consists of three meals a day and snacks when appropriate. Our students are at boarding school here in the UK and are therefore used to English food, but it is nice to ask them what their favourite food is, or even take them shopping with you and to try to accommodate their preferences when possible. They may even enjoy cooking a meal for you (under supervision of course!) or indeed helping you to cook. Try and help the student to become familiar with our culture and diet, while being respectful of their own cultural and religious background and taking into account their dietary needs. In most cases our students are very happy with home-cooked dishes that are a usual part of life here in the UK. Taking students out for a meal, can also be a fun thing to do and of course you will be reimbursed for the cost of their meal if you do this as a treat while they are staying with you.

As teenagers, many of our older students may take the opportunity to get up later than they do at school, so a smaller breakfast is fine. Then either lunch or dinner as the main meal of the day – it is not necessary to provide two large meals.

Snacks of fruit, nuts, or healthy options, cake and/or biscuits, can be offered as well as drinks during the day. Make sure your student knows your house rules regarding food. If they have any dietary issues or intolerances, we will flag this up to you.

Please pay careful attention to the safe preparation of all food stuffs and the storing of foods, including the safe storage and preparation of meat which is a particular hazard and can cause food poisoning, if not carefully managed.

Who is the Guardian?

This is a question we are often asked. We are contracted by the parents of our students to be their Educational Guardian while their child studies here in the UK. This is not the same as a legal guardian, i.e. someone who replaces a parent, instead we are here to act in loco parentis while the student is in the UK without their parents. The term “Guardian” has been adopted by many of the boarding schools to describe the role we undertake. Schools, host families and parents sometimes get confused about this and refer to the host family or Area Manager as their guardian. You are their host family and technically and legally Ben Hughes, the owner of Pippa’s Guardians, is the Educational Guardian to the student. As a host family you do not have ultimate responsibility for the student, that is our role.

Host family fee structure

Accommodation fee per student, per day or part thereof is £47.

Mileage for school collections or excursions for students is £0.50p per mile (Please note that trips you would already be taking are not chargeable to Pippa’s Guardians)

Out of pocket expenses for students can include but are not limited to: meals out; cinema, theatre, concert or theme park tickets; Christmas presents, if staying during this period; pocket money you provide to the student; dry cleaning; shopping such as clothing, shoes or haircuts for the student, etc. If you need to spend more than £50 on your student during a stay, please contact your Area Manager.

Examples

If you host two students for an exeat weekend, collect them at 3pm on Friday and take them back on Sunday at 6pm, the payment to you would be:

3 days @ £47 = £141
£141 x 2 students = £282 plus mileage to and from school at 50p a mile plus expenses.

If you host two students for a nine day half term, the payment would be:

9 days @ £47 = £423
£423 x 2 Students = £846 plus mileage to and from school at 50p a mile plus expenses.

Confirmation and Cancellation

We will confirm all the arrangements regarding the student’s stay with you with an email from our Travel Department at least one week prior to their arrival.

If we have to cancel a booking within *10 days of the start date of the students stay, we will try to ensure we place another student with you or you will receive 50% of the daily charge.

** Subject to the date of your signed agreement*

Expenses – how and what to claim for

Our on-line claim form facility is simple and quick, however, if you do not have access to the Internet then please contact our office on **01684 252757**.

We hold an expense account for each student which is used to pay our host families, so you do not have to wait for payment and the system ensures that you will be paid in full without incurring any financial risk at any time. Please provide us with a receipt or ticket for all out of pocket expenses you incur. Receipts can be scanned in when submitting your on-line expense form, or posted to us at:

Pippa’s Guardians

5, Grosvenor House
127, Church Street
Malvern, WR14 2BA

Payment

This will be made upon receipt of your expense claim. A step by step guide to using our on line claim form follows.

Registering for our online claim service

The first step is to register at; <http://www.pippasguardians.co.uk/host-families/host-family-registration/>

How to log in

Once you have submitted your request you will receive a “pending authorisation” email, thanking you for your registration. A second email will follow to confirm your account has been activated and providing a link for you to log in to the website, where you will need to enter your user name and password.

How to complete a claim

Please submit one claim form per individual student.

Details

Please enter your host family name, select your Area Manager and then enter the name of the student and school.



Day rate

If the student has stayed with you for a day or overnight please click yes, and a drop-down box will allow you to enter the date the student arrived and the date they departed. The number of days and the day expenses will be automatically calculated for you.

If you need to claim for a late notice cancellation please claim this in the **Additional Expenses** section

Mileage

If you wish to claim for mileage please click yes and a drop-down box will allow you to add the date of the trip, location from and to and the mileage. There is a + symbol for you to add further lines for additional trips if this is required. Please add a description of each trip taken in the box provided. The total mileage and mileage expenses will be automatically calculated for you.

Additional expenses

If you wish to claim additional expenses please click yes, and a drop-down box will allow you to claim for late notice cancellations (date from and to required), parents evening (date required) and expenses where you will need to input the date, description and cost. There is a + symbol for you to include as many of these as you wish.

Receipts: You are also given the option to either choose to upload the file receipts or click to advise us these will be sent in the post - if sending by post please include both your name and the students name.

Total expenses

The system will total up the **Day Rate, Mileage** and **Additional Expenses** to provide the total amount being claimed.

Payment details

If we already hold your bank account details, then please click the option "Bank details provided previously". If we do not have these already, or if you would like us to use a different account, then please complete the required fields.

The system is secure and protected, and your details will be treated with the utmost confidentiality – if you have any concerns then please send these by post if you prefer.

Additional comments

The students' parents love to hear a little more about the time their children spend with our host families, so just a few words here would be very much appreciated. Were they happy, tired or quiet? Did they eat well? Did they spend their time studying or were they playing on their PC? Please indicate any highlights or any concerns. Your Area Manager will be in touch after their visit and available during their stay if you need further support.

Email:

Please enter your email address so that we can send you a copy of your claim.

Once you have supplied your email address and submitted your claim form, a copy will automatically be sent to you and the Area Manager will be notified.

If you have any problems finding your copy, please check your "Spam" or "Junk" folder – if it is definitely not there, then please let us know by contacting our Head Office on **01684 252757**.

Receiving payment

We aim to make full payment within three - five working days of receiving your claim. If the payment hasn't been received or the amount isn't what you expected then contact accounts@pippasguardians.co.uk

Refer a friend

Over the years we have found our word of mouth referrals from existing host families to be very successful. If you know a family who are interested in becoming a host family for us then please do email Jodie Godliman on jodie@pippasguardians.co.uk with their details and we will get in touch with them. Once they have become a successful host family for us we would be delighted to send you a £75 John Lewis or Marks and Spencer gift voucher as our way of saying thank you.



Frequently asked questions

How many students can I host?

The maximum number of students recommended by AEGIS, our governing body, is three students at any one time. The number you choose to look after will be dictated by the amount of room you have available and the size of your family. Some people like to host two students at a time, so they can keep each other company.

When you may be needed to host our students

Once we have matched our students with you and both parties are happy with the arrangement, we like to keep the same host family for all holidays, where possible. These may include:

Exeats – some schools have two weekends each term when they close for two nights and the students have the weekend off. Some schools have only one and some have none at all.

Half terms – all our schools close for half term, each term and this is usually 9 nights but can also be up to 16 days. Your Area Manager will make you aware of the dates well in advance.

Easter and Christmas holidays

– very occasionally our students require hosting over the longer holidays. We would contact you in the first instance to discuss this and it is not an expected part of being a host family, although nice for the students to go to a family they know.

Suspensions – this is very rare, but can happen if students are caught drinking, smoking or in the case of bad behaviour and again we may call you to see if you can host the student for their suspension, which could be between one night to one week.

One off events – sometimes our students need one or two night's accommodation either when they arrive back into the UK after a school holiday or before they return home, depending on when flights are booked. Students can also sometimes need short term care if they are ill or if flights are cancelled. In these circumstances, we may contact you to see if you are able to care for them until they can return to school or home.

Confirmation of arrangements, changes of plan and cancellation

When you agree to hosting our students, our Travel Department will send you a confirmation email providing all the necessary details; where to collect your student and at what time, or the arrangements if one of our drivers is due to collect them. Please make yourself known to the house parent of the student you are collecting or the teacher on duty. This will ensure the school know you are the correct person collecting the student and allows for a smooth handover. Please go to reception at the school in the first instance.

We aim to provide all our host families with as much notice as possible when they are required to host students, however, there is no guarantee that they will be used for each holiday detailed above, as students sometimes change their plans, stay with a school friend, or visit relatives. If we have to cancel a booking within *10 days of the start date of the students stay, we will try to ensure we place another student with you or you will receive 50% of the daily charge.

** Subject to the date of your signed agreement*

What happens if I can't host at a particular time?

Ideally, as term dates are available up to two years in advance, hosting our students works best when they come regularly to you and we ask that you try to plan any commitments you have accordingly. However, we appreciate this isn't always possible and encourage you to let us know as far in advance if you are not able to host your student, so that we can organise for another host family to look after them.

Other times you may be needed

Some of our host families also offer to take our students to and from the airports at the beginning and end of term. If you are happy to offer this service, please let us know.

School visits will not be required by the host family, as a representative of Pippa's Guardians will attend on the parents' behalf. However, if the host family wishes to support the student by attending plays, concerts or sport matches then this can be done on a voluntary basis and will be much appreciated.

We always encourage our host families to meet the parents of the students they will be looking after, wherever possible. Often overseas parents arrive at the start of the school year, or term and ask to meet our host families when they come to drop off their child at school. It is reassuring for them to meet the people who will play a very important part in caring for their child while they are here in the UK and they are always appreciative if you can make time to meet them. This can make the experience of hosting our students even more special as genuine friendships between the families often develop.

Driving our students

Host family members who drive our students must be aged 25 or over. If you are using your car to provide transport for our students you must have comprehensive insurance in place and you need to inform your insurance company that you will be providing transport to a student. Please ensure your car is safe and roadworthy with a full MOT, road tax and that the student travels safely using seat belts correctly at all times.

Children must use the appropriate child car seat until they're 12 years old or 135 centimetres tall, whichever comes first.

If you are transporting an individual student, we would advise they travel in the back seat of the car.

Pocket money for students

Many of our students have their own bank accounts, but younger students may not. If you need to provide our students with pocket money of up to £50, please make a note of this on your expense form and claim it back from us.

Valuables, luggage and other important information

Passports and other valuable items that students own should be left at school wherever possible. We recommend if a student brings a sum of money with them, it is a good idea for this to be passed to you for safe-keeping. It may seem formal, but please provide them with a receipt. Do encourage your student not to carry large sums of money, important documents or valuables around with them.

Please do not store luggage for any of our students. We can provide this service for them if they need it.

Home Insurance

It is essential that you have comprehensive home insurance, and you inform your insurance company that on occasion you will be hosting international students.

Student safety

Who needs a DBS check?

Everyone in your household aged 16 or over is required to have a current DBS check carried out by Pippa's Guardians. This includes anyone who will be staying overnight with you whilst you are hosting our students.

Advising us of changes

Host families must advise their Area Manager of any changes in the household composition during their time as a host family (e.g. a new baby, parental separation, lodgers over 16, someone living at the accommodation ceases to be employed or someone new joins the household).

Staying home alone and going out

What students can and can't do while they are in your care and the rules we require you to uphold while hosting our students, is what we are most questioned about by our host families. We trust you to ensure the safety of our students and while they are with you we have clear guidelines about what they are and are not allowed to do. Please use your common sense, we know that every student is an individual and has a different level of maturity and so you will need to use your own judgement in some cases. If you are not sure, please always ask your Area Manager. This way we can work together to ensure the students are happy and secure in your care.

Make sure your student has an ICE card

Please issue your student with an ICE card (In Case of Emergency) if they are aged 15 or over and going out unaccompanied at any time. This has our emergency contact numbers on it at Pippa's Guardians and you will need to fill in your own address and telephone number for your student.

You will receive several ICE cards when your application has been approved. Please contact your Area Manager if you require more of these.

The safety of our students is our top priority – if you are not happy giving consent to your student for them to leave your home, then please contact your Area Manager for guidance.

The rules regarding age appropriate safeguards are as follows:

AGED UNDER 14

Students aged 14 years are not permitted to go out alone and should not be left unaccompanied in the home. However, it is acceptable to leave your student with another household member aged 16 and over whilst you are walking your dog or popping to the shops.

The children of host families are not allowed to babysit unless they are 16 and over and have a current DBS check from Pippa's Guardians. If aged 16 and over your own children may accompany students in this age range on their own outside of the home, but only for local trips such as visiting the shops, cinema or leisure centre. Please ensure that your student has both your contact number and that of their Area Manager saved to their mobile phone.

AGED 15 to 16

Students aged 15 and 16 can be left alone for short periods of time, as long as they know how to contact you in an emergency and can go out alone on age appropriate trips (for example, to the local town shopping, leisure centre or cinema) but must return to the host family home before dark or 7pm whichever is first. The student must:

1. Have a charged mobile phone, with available credit, kept on at all times.
2. Have the phone numbers of their host family, Area Manager and Pippa's Guardians emergency phone number with them at all times.
3. Know the address of their host family and how to get back to the house safely.
4. Have the details above on a Pippa's Guardians ICE card - this card should be kept separate from any phone or money in case a student should lose his or her phone and wallet.
5. Have a plan of how to get to their destination and back and agree a home time.
6. Make sure they let you know if they are going to be later than agreed.

Although it may seem second nature to us – many of our students are not familiar with our traffic and road systems or public transport etc. The host family must know exactly where the student is going, who they are meeting and what they are doing. In some cases, it might be an idea if suitable, to walk them through an outing – for example if they are going to the cinema to meet a school friend, see if you can walk them there before they go on their own. Students of this age are NOT permitted to travel further afield.

AGED 17 to 18

Students aged 17 and 18, will often want to go out unaccompanied. They are allowed to do so, within reason, but must make sure they tell you where they are going, who they are meeting, how they are getting to their destination and returning home again and what time they will be back. We ask all students aged 17 and over to be back by 10pm at the latest (provided the host family are in agreement) when going out alone.

Sometimes these older students will want to go further afield on their own – we are often asked if they can go to London or a large city. In this instance written parental approval is required and points 1-6 below, must be very detailed. We would in all cases prefer students who are travelling this way to travel with another student from school or with a member of your family aged 18 or over.

The student must:

1. Have a charged mobile phone, kept on at all times with credit available.
2. Have the phone numbers of their host family, Area Manager and Pippa's Guardians emergency phone number with them at all times.
3. Know the address of their host family and how to get back to the house safely.
4. Have the details above on a Pippa's Guardians ICE card – this card should be kept separate from any phone or money in case a student should lose his or her phone and wallet.
5. Have a plan of how to get to their destination and back and agree a home time.
6. Make sure they let you know if they are going to be later than agreed.

Taking the students away from home overnight

If you and your family are planning to go away for a night with the student in your care, please inform your Area Manager well in advance in order to receive our agreement. We understand that this may be practical for you and lovely for our students, but our safeguarding rules mean that this must be carefully controlled. The request will have an implication on the DBS requirements of those you are staying with and it is a requirement of the UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) that Pippa's Guardians know the exact overnight address of every student in our guardianship at all times whilst they are studying in the UK.

Students visiting friends overnight

Students, particularly older ones who are more independent, may ask you if they can go out or visit friends at the last minute. Sometimes, they will also try to make arrangements themselves, but because we are their guardians at Pippa's Guardians, all requests must be sanctioned by us.

While the student is staying with you, it is forbidden for them to go and stay with their friends for a night or more unless they have specific permission from Pippa's Guardians. Consent from parents in writing will be required by us prior to the event – if the parent advises the host family directly, please ensure this information is immediately passed on to us – again this is part of the requirement of the UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) Department.

Other guests or students staying at your house

If a host family is hosting other students or guests in the house (which have not been previously disclosed), the host family must tell their Area Manager immediately. We need to know this information to ensure the environment is still suitable and safe for our students. All guests staying aged 16 or over are subject to a DBS check. Please contact us if you have any queries.

Inviting friends to stay with our host families

Sometimes students ask if they can take other friends to stay with their host families. If families have room and are happy to accommodate other students that are not registered with Pippa's Guardians, then we can organise this, but in order that everything is formalised, the student's friend needs to join our Guardianship scheme. This means that we need their parent or guardian to enrol them temporarily onto our guardianship programme for the duration of the stay. We need a form completed with medical questions and payment of a fee plus the host family fees. If your student approaches you about this, please do not deal with the student directly but refer it back to us. This way you are protected by our guardianship organisation and will be guaranteed payment.

Using a babysitter for our students

You may leave a student who is 14 years of age or under for a short time in the care of another member of your family who is 16 years or over and has been DBS checked by us. If you think you will need to leave your student for longer, for example to go out in the evening, you must arrange for a babysitter who must be 18 years or over and hold a current DBS check from Pippa's Guardians. We know that many of our families may have a regular babysitter and would like to use them in such instances. Please contact us and we will arrange for a DBS check to be completed. If your student is aged 15 or 16, they can be left for short periods of time; for any longer, they too would require a babysitter as above. Students who are aged 17 or 18 can be left at home alone if you need to go out for the evening, as long as they are comfortable with this arrangement and have your contact details.

Smoking, drugs and alcohol

At Pippa's Guardians, and of course at all UK boarding schools we work with, there is a no tolerance policy towards smoking, drugs and alcohol. Students of any age are not allowed to drink or smoke at school. Drugs, including controlled substances and also "legal highs" and any substance supplied for misuse, are strictly forbidden at all times. Alcohol is forbidden unless the student is over the age of 18 years. If your student is over 18, please use your discretion when allowing a student to drink alcohol and seek permission from your Area Manager first.

Alcohol should always be stored appropriately in your home.

Computers and Internet safety

Please read our E-safety policy which is available at www.pippasguardians.co.uk under the **Policies** section.

While staying at your home, all our students will want to use your WiFi! Please make sure it works adequately and provide them with the WiFi code, as it is important for them to be able to contact home. They will also want to use their own laptops, tablets or smart phones to work or play games while they are staying with you. While we encourage our students to interact with our families as much as possible, the use of the internet while at your home is entirely at your discretion, as is their use of your own computer or tablet. If the student needs to use your computer, please make sure you have relevant safety software installed and keep a watchful eye on what they are accessing via the internet. At school their use of the internet will be restricted by software to prevent them looking at inappropriate or illegal sites. Further advice can be found at www.vodafoneparenting.co.uk. It is a good idea to set up the ground rules on internet access right from the start, e.g. you would like them to turn off phones after a certain time. If you do not have unlimited broadband usage and will be charged if your usage goes over a certain amount, please ensure you let the students know this and limit their time on the internet.

Please do not hesitate to contact your Area Manager should you require any further information or guidance.

Safety at home

Being safety conscious and aware of potential dangers in the home is an important part of being a host family. Below are some of the practical things you can do to prevent accidents occurring in your home together with the safety rules and regulations we ask you to adhere to.

1. Gas, oil or solid fuel heating appliances – these must be professionally serviced once a year to prevent fires or carbon monoxide poisoning. Servicing must be done by competent, authorised professionals and in the case of gas appliances, a Gas Safe registered engineer must carry out this work and a copy of the certificate should be provided to us for our records.

The room where any gas appliance is located must have adequate ventilation - air inlets should not be blocked to prevent draughts, and flues and chimneys should not be obstructed.

2. Fire in the home – every host family has a duty to protect our students by making sure they have a properly fitted and regularly tested smoke alarms (monthly) You should have, as a minimum, one smoke alarm installed on every storey of the house and a carbon monoxide alarm should be installed in any room containing a gas, liquid or solid fuel burning appliance. Please make sure your student knows how to escape in the event of a fire by showing them the exits they would need to use in an emergency and where to find the keys to doors or windows. It is not an AEGIS requirement for host families to have fire extinguishers or fire blankets, unless the property is classed as a house in multiple occupation. If fire extinguishers and fire blankets are provided they must be suitably serviced.

Where open fires are used, a suitable fire guard should be in place when the fire is lit and any matches or lighters should be appropriately stored.

3. Electrical wiring and electrocution - alterations must be up to date and meet current standards. Please reduce the risk of electrical fires and electrocution by never using appliances with cracked plugs or worn cables and avoid overloading electrical sockets. Make sure your student knows not to take any electrical equipment into the bathroom and not to touch electrical equipment with wet hands. Never use an appliance or let your student use an appliance if you suspect it of being unsafe.

4. Burns and scalds – please make sure your student is aware of the dangers of using a kettle or other equipment that can cause burns and scalds. Cooking is a particular danger – make sure they know how to heat pans on the back ring first, with handles safely positioned.

5. Poisoning and safe storage of medicine and chemicals – please keep household chemicals out of sight and out of reach of children, preferably in a lockable cupboard. Safely store all medicines out of sight in a place not accessible by your student.

6. First aid kit – make sure you have a first aid kit for minor injuries and that your student knows where it is kept. A basic first aid kit should be available to include, plasters, sterile eye-pad, triangular bandage, safety pins, non-medicated wound dressing, disposable gloves and a leaflet giving guidance on first aid.

Emergencies and medical issues

If your student is ill while staying with you, please take the same precautions as you would with your own child and the illness should be reported to your Area Manager. Please arrange to accompany the student to the GP or dentist if necessary. All the students under our guardianship care are registered with a NHS doctor at their school, and thus students can receive medical attention as a visitor under the NHS. You can administer paracetamol in the correct dosage if you feel this is necessary.

We have some students with allergies or medical issues. Full disclosure of any medical condition of our students will be made to you before you agree to host them, and you will be made aware of any medication that is required and how it should be administered. Please be reassured that the parents have full responsibility for their child in your care; a signed, medical consent form will be held on file at the students registered school.

If a medical emergency should arise you should contact the emergency services or a doctor as necessary, as they will be able to give immediate assistance. Please inform your Area Manager as soon as possible.

Safeguarding

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Imogen Trevethan – 07593 443685

Our Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is Ben Hughes – 07714 034749

If you suspect a student that you are looking after has been abused, you must report this as soon as possible to our Designated Safeguarding Lead or to her Deputy.

Pippa's Guardians acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and AEGIS requirements.

As a member of AEGIS we ensure we work to the highest safeguarding practices. Becoming a host family for Pippa's Guardians means that you are willing to adopt our **Safeguarding Policy** and standards. The nature of our relationship with you is a working one and when you sign our contract, you are agreeing to uphold our standards and we guarantee in return to offer you an unrivalled level of support and commitment.

Our **Safeguarding Policy** can be found at www.pippasguardians.co.uk; please do take time to read it and contact us if you have any questions or need further information regarding your responsibilities. If you would like us to provide you with a hard copy of this policy please contact our DSL Imogen Trevethan on imogen@pippasguardians.co.uk

If a student starts talking about an incident; listen carefully, make notes, do not promise confidentiality, indicate that you believe the student and do not question them. Please pass on any information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Pippa's Guardians as soon as possible. Respect the student's right to confidentiality, but this right

can, and should be overridden if it is necessary to do so, in order to protect the student's safety and welfare.

It goes without saying you should not use corporal punishment or have any inappropriate physical contact with your student.

Ensure that consent is obtained from your Area Manager at Pippa's Guardians before allowing the student to take part in unduly hazardous or dangerous sports and activities when in your care.

Guidelines to help support a student who is being bullied

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

- Listen and reassure them that coming to you was the right thing to do. Try and establish the facts. It can be helpful to keep a diary of events to share with the school or college.
- Assure them that the bullying is not their fault and that they have family that will support them. Reassure them that you will not take any action without discussing it with them first.
- Don't encourage retaliation to bullying - such as violent actions. It's important for children to avoid hitting or punching an abusive peer. Reacting that way has negative and unpredictable results- they may be hurt even further, and find that they are labelled as the problem. Rather suggest that they walk away and seek help.
- Find out what your child wants to happen next. Help to identify the choices open to them; the potential next steps to take; and the skills they may have to help solve the problems.
- Encourage your child to get involved in activities that build their confidence and esteem, and help them to form friendships outside of school (or wherever the bullying is taking place).

- Discuss the situation with your child's teacher or Head teacher - or the lead adult wherever the bullying is taking place. Every child has a right to a safe environment in which to learn and play. Schools must have a behaviour policy which sets out the measures that will be taken to prevent all forms of bullying between pupils. For more information on making a complaint about bullying, visit Making a complaint

PREVENT – Anti-Radicalisation Policy

Introduction

Pippa's Guardians recognises its duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and in line with The Prevent Duty June 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. The aim of the Prevent Duty is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism

Pippa's Guardians accepts the Department for Education's definition of extremism as; 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Also included in this definition of extremism is calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations.

Pippa's Guardians staff have all undergone government e-learning training on Prevent. Our Prevent policy can be found on our website www.pippasguardians.co.uk under Our Policies section. Students will be alerted to our Prevent policy on joining Pippa's Guardians through age appropriate discussions with their Area Manager.

If you have a concern about a young person, they should follow Pippa's Guardians normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Imogen Trevethan or Deputy DSL, Ben Hughes. Further steps can then be taken by the DSL or DDSL to refer on to the Local Children Safeguarding Board and/or seek advice from other involved parties such as the students' school.

DSL – Imogen Trevethan
07593 443685
or imogen@pippasguardians.co.uk

DDSL – Ben Hughes
07714 034749
or ben@pippasguardians.co.uk

Pippa's Guardians 24-hour emergency number is 07721 372865

HOW TO CONTACT US IN AN EMERGENCY:

Emergency phone line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: 07721 372 865

Our Head Office number is **01684 252 757**

Ben Hughes
Managing Director
telephone 07714 034749 ben@pippasguardians.co.uk

Please note your Area Manager name here:

.....

Please note your Area Manager email here:

.....

Please note your Area Manager telephone number here:

.....



Use of CCTV

The ICO has a Code of Practice in relation to the use of CCTVs inside and outside properties which can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/media/1542/cctv-code-of-practice.pdf>. This must be adhered to by any homestay using CCTV

6.9.5 The key is having a clear and lawful need for the recording and to be able to demonstrate why CCTV is appropriate to meet that need, taking into account an individual's right to privacy and what the CCTV user has done to ensure the recordings are no more intrusive than they need to be and that there is a clear system to ensure any data obtained is adequately protected, in line with the usual data protection principles (just as for written data).

It is essential that the ICO guidelines have been adhered to and that the main homestay carer has a paper trail to demonstrate this.

Host Families using CCTV are expected to remain up to date with any changes in this Code of Practice.

GDPR

At Pippa's Guardians we are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. Our Data Protection and Privacy Policy explains why we collect personal information, how we use it, the conditions under which we may disclose it to others and how we keep it secure.

We amend this policy in line with statutory guidance so please do check our Policies page at www.pippasguardians.co.uk at regular intervals so you can read the most up to date version of this policy and ensure that you are up to date and happy with any changes.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like any further clarification on this. Our Data Protection Officer is Ben Hughes and Ben can be contacted on [01684 252757](tel:01684252757) or via email on ben@pippasguardians.co.uk.



Guidance for Hosting Families during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Overview

This document has been prepared for Pippa's Guardians host families who are hosting our students during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Pippa's Guardians have worked extensively with our Governing Body, AEGIS, and the Boarding Schools Association (BSA) adhering to PHE (Public Health England) and Government guidelines to ensure our host families have all the information needed to host with confidence during these unprecedented times.

This guidance will be kept under regular review taking into account any new updates published by the UK government and Public Health England and will be redistributed to you as necessary. Please do let us know if you would prefer us to issue you with a hard copy of this guidance and we will do so immediately.

Pippa's Guardians 24hr support

Pippa's Guardians staff are on hand to offer support and advice 24hrs a day via our emergency helpline (07721 372865) and your Area Manager will of course be in regular contact with you as usual during any student stay to advise and support in any way they can. Please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Pippa's Guardians team should you like to discuss anything further at this time. We are all here to help.

School Preparations

Schools have followed PHE advice and that of the Safe Schools UK and BSA Charters and have worked incredibly hard in implementing an enormous amount of safety measures including regular testing to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 for all students. Please be assured schools will be extremely vigilant with regards to all student's well-being and general health.

Government guidelines state that if a student in a boarding school should show symptoms of Covid-19 then that school will provide isolation facilities on site and will ensure that students self-isolate and are looked after by school staff.

Before a student arrives with you

When your student arrives, it is a good idea to run through your own household hygiene routine so they are clear from the outset of your expectations and their responsibilities.

General hygiene advice which we would ask our host families and their students to follow to minimise any transmission risk of Covid-19 are:

- Regular cleaning of household surfaces with a disinfectant paying particular attention to high traffic areas such as light switches, door handles and TV remote controls.
- Regular hand washing for at least 20 seconds or the use of hand sanitiser where this is not possible.
- Remembering to respect current social distancing guidance
- Wearing a face covering where government guidance deems it necessary.
- Catching coughs and sneezes in a tissue and throwing into a bin immediately.
- You should ask your student to stay away from vulnerable individuals in your household, such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions, as much as possible.

A good mantra to share with them is Hands, Face, Space!

If you live in an area with local restrictions in place because of higher transmission of Covid-19, you should follow the advice for your particular area in addition to the advice above.

Driving our students

When travelling together in a family car, it is more difficult to exercise social distancing. We recommend that the student and all family members wear face masks or face coverings for their own protection whilst in a confined space together. Pippa's Guardians have a full Covid 19 driver set of guidelines which can be found here <https://www.pippasguardians.co.uk/download/30331/>

What to do if a student displays symptoms of Covid-19 during a host family stay

Pippa's Guardians will not knowingly ever accept a student with Covid-19 symptoms from a school and will never ask a host family to take care of a student who is displaying Covid-19 symptoms.

However, we would like to ask you to consider and prepare for the unlikely event that a student should present with symptoms once they have arrived with a host family.

If a member of your household (during a student stay) or a student who you are hosting develops symptoms of Covid-19 – currently explained as a high temperature, a new and persistent cough or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), however mild then please follow the steps below;

Inform Pippa's Guardians immediately by calling your Area Manager or our 24-hour emergency helpline on **07721372865**. Please also refer to government guidance using this link for the latest advice for a self isolating household. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

A test will need to be arranged and Pippa's Guardians will assist you with booking this test. Details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Pippa's Guardians can supply any additional PPE you may require at this time. Please do discuss this with your Area Manager if this should be something you require.

Please refer to current government stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed Covid 19 infection which can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection

The student should remain in their room and food should be brought to them on a tray and left outside the door. The student should leave the empty plate and tray outside their room to be cleared away. Ensure they have their own crockery and cutlery assigned to them.

Our student should ideally have their own bathroom to use but if this is not possible, they should be asked to clean the surfaces and toilet each time they use it. Please have cleaning items available to them and show them where these are kept when they first arrive. Please do not share towels. Student towels and bedding should be washed regularly on a hot wash and kept separate from other family washing.

Encourage the student to open a window to encourage good ventilation in their room.

If a student's symptoms worsen then please advise your Area Manager and a further plan of action can be discussed and advice sought from NHS 111. In a medical emergency please do call 999.

If a student still has a temperature after 10 days, they should remain at home and Pippa's Guardians will seek additional medical advice.

Safe ways for children and young people to connect with their friends.

If you are happy for students to meet with their friends during their stay please remind them of the current government guidance on socialising which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>.

They can of course if they or you prefer connect online or via phone or video calls. Our E-Safety policy on our website <https://www.pippasguardians.co.uk/download/31113/> can be referred to you if you would like to remind yourself of the importance of our students remaining safe online.

Pippa's Guardians staff are fully committed to supporting all of our host families throughout this challenging time. Please do not hesitate to contact any of our team if you require any further clarification at this time.

Post travel quarantine hosting

If you have kindly offered to support a student by hosting them for a 10 day post travel quarantine period before they return to school, we ask that you follow the latest government guidelines for individuals who are living in a family home whilst they self-isolate. The guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england>

Students should avoid contact with other family member at all times during their stay. Meals should be taken in their bedroom.

If your student has organised to take part in the Test to Release Scheme you can find the current guidance here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel>. Your Area Manager will be able to offer full support to you and your student wherever necessary.

Complaints

The following parties may have a grievance against Pippa's Guardians

- Overseas parent(s) (on behalf of the student)
- UK host family
- School
- Another Guardianship organisation
- Overseas agent or other organisation, which may have placed a student with Pippa's Guardians

Stage 1 - Informal

In the first instance, all grievances should be made informally to Ben Hughes, Managing Director of Pippa's Guardians. Ben can be contacted on 01684 252757 or 07714 034749 or ben@pippasguardians.co.uk.

It is to be hoped that the matter will be resolved satisfactorily between the parties involved at this stage. An informal complaint should expect a response within 3-5 working days.

If appropriate, it can be helpful to call informally upon the services of an impartial arbitrator who has some experience and prior knowledge of the circumstances, which led to the declaration of a grievance.

Records will be kept, in chronological order, of all correspondence, subsequent responses and action taken.

Stage 2 - Formal

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, then grievances should be directed in writing, to Ben Hughes, Managing Director. The address is Pippa's Guardians, 5, Grosvenor House, 127, Church Street, Malvern, WR14 2BA or on ben@pippasguardians.co.uk. A formal acknowledgment of the complaint will be acknowledged within 24 hrs and once fully investigated a response will be offered within 10 days from the date of the complaint.

As for Stage 1, records will be kept, in chronological order, of all correspondence, subsequent responses and action taken.

Stage 3 - Panel

If the grievance cannot be resolved successfully at stage 2, both parties may make formal representations, in writing, to the trustees of AEGIS c/o:

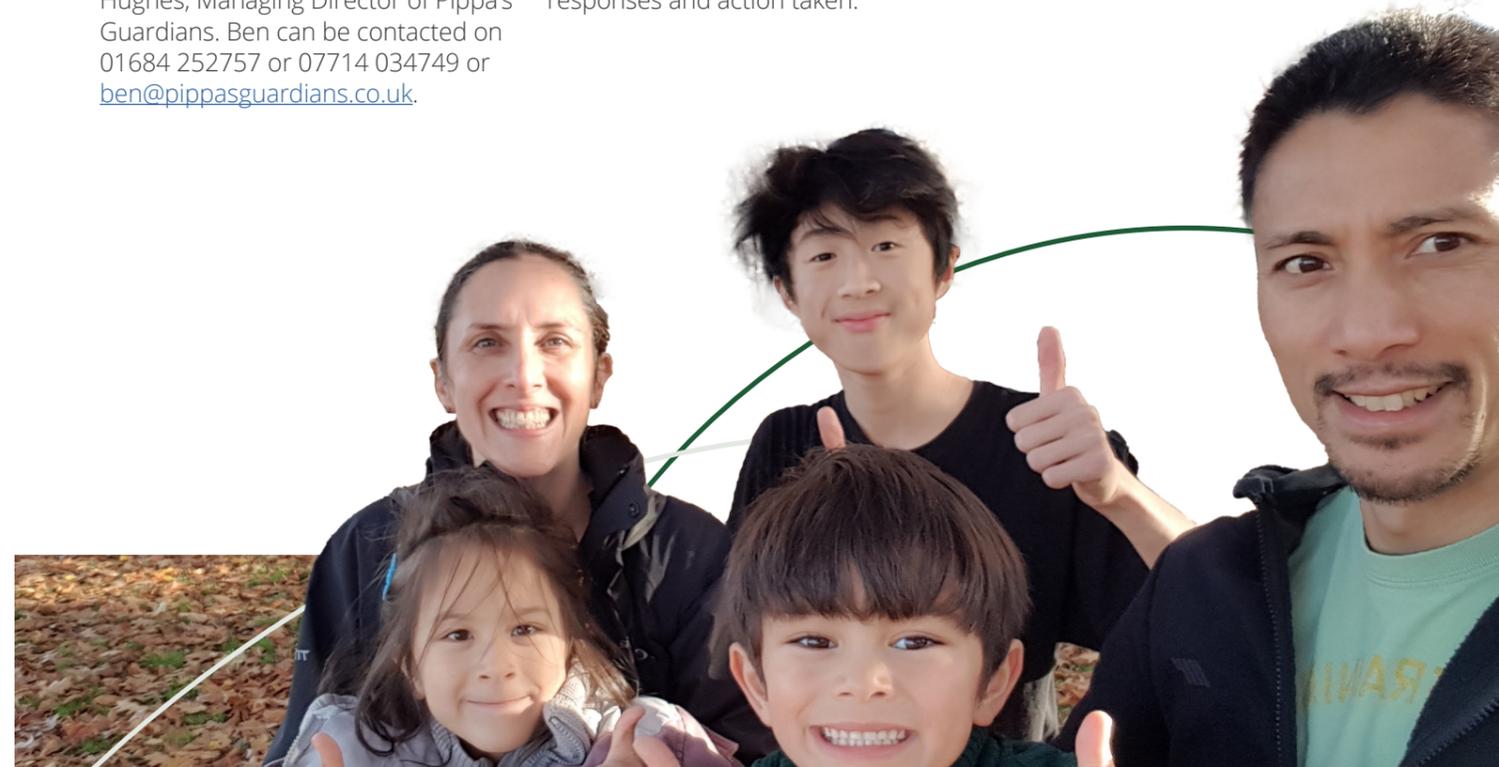
Yasemin Wigglesworth
Executive Officer

AEGIS
The Wheelhouse
Bond's Mill Estate
Bristol Road Stonehouse
Gloucestershire
GL10 3RF

E-mail: info@aegisuk.net
Telephone: +44 (0) 1453 821293

Feedback

If you have any comments on this handbook or any of our systems or procedures and how they may be improved, then please let us know by emailing us at info@pippasguardians.co.uk. We value our working relationship with you and any concerns you may have should in the first instance be directed to your appointed Area Manager or Managing Director Ben Hughes.



AEGIS ACCREDITED



Est. 1997 • AEGIS Accredited

Office: +44 (0)1684 252757 • Emergency: +44 (0)7721 372865
office@pippasguardians.co.uk • www.pippasguardians.co.uk

5 Grosvenor House, 127 Church Street, Malvern, WR14 2BA

Pippa's Guardians Ltd. Registered in England and Wales. Company Number: 08434636