

A photograph of five students in school uniforms standing in a classroom. From left to right: a girl with her arms crossed, a boy, a girl, a boy, and a girl. They are all looking towards the right. The background shows a classroom with a window and a whiteboard.

# Student Handbook

# Contents

<b>Contact Details</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>What is an Educational Guardian?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The role of the guardianship organisation</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>What is a Host Family</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Your responsibilities as a student</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Living in the UK</b>	<b>5</b>
The Weather	5
<b>Keeping Safe</b>	<b>6</b>
Personal safety and the care of valuable possessions and cash / credit cards	6
In an emergency	6
<b>Safeguarding</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>List of useful contacts</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Prevent / anti-radicalisation</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Safe use of the internet, access to Wi-Fi</b>	<b>8</b>
How to report concerns:	8
<b>Bullying / cyberbullying</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Living with a host family</b>	<b>9</b>
Mealtimes	9
Use of the bathroom	10
Laundry arrangements	10
Homesickness	10
Electrical appliances and safety	11
What to do in a medical emergency	11
Permission for visiting the local area / travelling further afield	11
Students staying away from the host family	11
Curfews and Bedtimes	11
<b>Student Misbehaviour</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>English laws</b>	<b>12</b>
Laws regarding the consumption of alcohol	12
Laws regarding the use of drugs and illegal substances	12
Laws regarding smoking	13
Laws regarding sexual activity	13
Laws regarding tattoos and body piercings	13
<b>Mobile phones</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Travelling around</b>	<b>14</b>
Using Maps on Your Phone	15
Money and valuables	15
<b>Keeping your passport, BRP safe and police registration</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Religion in the UK and access to places of worship</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Learning to drive</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>School rules</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Enjoy your stay</b>	<b>16</b>

# Welcome to Aspire Guardians

Welcome to the Aspire Guardians Family!

Firstly, we'd like to welcome you and offer a warm-hearted thank you for choosing Aspire Guardians to look after you and entrust us with this great responsibility for the upcoming year whilst you are in the UK.

In this guide, you will find everything you need to help you and your family prepare for your trip to the UK. We have included important contact details for when you need to get in touch, a mini guide to living in the UK, an insight into the culture and even a recommendation on what to wear whilst in the UK.



We hope you find this guide useful as it comes from our experience of the UK and what students are most concerned or confused about prior to departure.

We would like to wish all of our students an enjoyable and fulfilling year in the UK and remind you that the Aspire team is here to provide support for you and your children every step of the way, whenever you may need.

If you have any other questions or recommendations of things that we should include, please do let us know!

## Contact Details

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

General enquiries	
<b>Telephone</b> UK Office hours (Mon - Fri - 9:00 - 17:00) HK Office hours (Mon - Fri - 10:00 - 18:00, Sat by appointment only)	+44 7542 181 244 +852 5978 6678
Email	info@aspireguardians.com
Whatsapp UK	
Whatsapp HK	
Emergencies 24/7	

Telephone	UK +44 7542 181 244 HK +852 5978 6168
<b>Safeguarding concerns</b>	
Designated safeguarding Lead Mrs Thomas	UK +44 7542 181 244 sthomas@aspireguardians.com
Contact Details for the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP): The City of London & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP)	0208 356 6956 Out of hours: 0208 356 2710 MASH@hackney.gov.uk
Contact Details for the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO): City of London	Emergency Duty Team on 020 7332 1215 Emergency LADO Team: 07795 090649 LADO@cityoflondon.gov.uk

### What is an Educational Guardian?

The term 'guardian' differs from a 'legal guardian'. A legal guardian is someone who replaces a parent, whereas an Education Guardian is appointed by parents of students who attend a UK Boarding School and act in loco parentis while their children are in the UK without them. Schools, parents and students often get confused as to who is actually their guardian and will refer to the host family as their guardian.

Technically and legally, Aspire Guardians is the guardian to the student. Although you will likely stay with a host family, they do not have the ultimate responsibility for the student and are protected by Aspire's insurance and company infrastructure.

### The role of the guardianship organisation

Our job as educational guardians, or guardians involves supporting you to prepare for your departure to a UK boarding school. We support you before you have even left your home country and help you through the first few weeks of term. We will of course continue to support you throughout your stay in the UK and at host families if required. If for any reason you are required to leave school, we will find a host family for you. This could be for any weekend closures, known as exeats or any school holidays. We ensure you travel safely around the UK using our trusted drivers; taxi firms or hosts, or on occasions, where permitted, on public transport with prior parent and school approval.

### What is a Host Family

Aspire Guardians could not operate without our host families and we thank them for generously opening their homes to support you. We believe that time spent with a host family provides valuable benefits to you. Firstly, it provides you with a home away from home and somewhere to relax outside of the school environment. Staying with a host family will also give you a cultural experience depending on where you're from. We ask our host families to treat our Aspire students as a part of the family, as if they were their own children!

### Your responsibilities as a student

Aspire Guardians has a [Student Behaviour Code of Conduct](#) which outlines the positive behaviour it expects from students. Please see the stand-alone code of conduct for further

details. Some guidelines are also covered in the relevant sections of this handbook. Please make sure you read these to help you understand Aspire's expectations.

The biometric residence permit is proof of the holder's right to stay, work or study in the UK. It can also be used as a form of identification (for example, if they wish to open a bank account in the UK). The holder is not required to carry their permit at all times, but they must show it at border control, together with their passport, when travelling outside of and when returning to the UK. The card confirms the date the holder's leave expires, whether they have the right to work in the UK and other restrictions placed on the right to stay.

You'll get a biometric residence permit (BRP) if you:

- Apply to come to the UK for longer than 6 months
- Extend your visa to longer than 6 months
- Apply to settle in the UK
- Transfer your visa to a new passport
- Apply for certain Home Office travel documents

You do not have to apply separately for a BRP. You'll get one automatically if your visa or immigration application is approved, or you're replacing an older document.

## Arriving in the UK

Like with all international airports, you can anticipate a busy and bustling atmosphere. We understand that while some students find arriving into the UK very exciting, others can feel slightly nervous, especially if they haven't been away from home on their own before. On arrival at your UK airport, although everyone looks busy, people in England are very friendly. Once you're off the plane, you'll soon be with your host family or on your school coach.

## Passport Control

Make sure you have your passport with you before leaving your home country!

Upon arrival at Heathrow Airport, you will disembark the plane and follow signs for **passport control**. You must show your passport and your visa here. Make sure you have all your documents to hand in case immigration asks you for proof of pick up and which school you attend. Remember to keep the Aspire Guardians letter with you to show immigration in case they ask who will be responsible for you in the UK.

## Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)<sup>1</sup>

- Your name, date and place of birth
- Your fingerprints and a photo of your face (this is your biometric information)
- Your immigration status and any conditions of your stay
- Whether you can access public funds, for example benefits and health services

You can use your BRP to confirm your:

- Identity
- Right to study or work in the UK
- Right to any public services or benefits you're entitled to

---

1

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/539328/In-Country\\_information\\_leaflet\\_-\\_July\\_2016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539328/In-Country_information_leaflet_-_July_2016.pdf)



If you are required to register with the police as a condition of your stay in the UK, this will be confirmed on the 30 day vignette issued to you to allow you to travel to the UK. The vignette will need to be shown to police when registering. Those required to register must do so within 7 days of arrival in the UK.

Where you applied for your visa will determine how you will receive your BRP:

- if your visa application was made from outside the UK: you will have to select where you want to collect your BRP from a named Post Office Branch or an Alternative Collection Location (ACL), your sponsor (school or host family). This will normally keep student BRPs at the admissions office so please be sure to check when you arrive.
- if your visa application was made from within the UK: your BRP will be sent directly to your correspondence address as stated on your visa application form.

Mistakes on your BRP card may happen so it is important that you check for any errors on your visa. You will be able to get your BRP corrected if you report the problem within the specified timeframe.

Possible mistakes could be with:

- Your personal details: check that there are no spelling mistakes in your name and check that your date and place of birth are correct.
- The expiry date: the validity dates of your visa should be carefully checked as it indicates the date you are permitted to stay in the UK until. Every Student visa holder will have an additional 'post-study' period after their course ends. The length of this period depends on the course type and duration.

## Baggage Claim

We recommend making sure you have something on your suitcase that makes it easily identifiable amongst all the cases on the carousel. This could be a suitcase strap or a luggage tag.

Once you have gone through passport control, you will make your way to **baggage claim**. Make sure you check the screens to know which carousel your suitcase will arrive on. Once you have collected all your bags. Make your way through **customs**. If there is anything you need to declare, please do so at this point before exiting the airport.

## Leaving the Airport

Once you have gone through the formalities of leaving the airport Aspire can help to organise the school coach, a taxi or an Aspire representative to come and collect you from the airport. As you walk through customs we will ensure that your driver or Aspire representative has a clear sign with your name on it. Please ensure you ask them that they have been booked through Aspire Guardians.

If you have booked the school coach then the school (or Aspire) will provide you with clear instructions of how to find where the coach will be waiting for you. We will of course keep you updated on any information that the school provides us to ensure you know where you are going!

Aspire will provide you with an emergency contact card. Please [keep this handy and feel free to call us should you feel like you need to](#). If we aren't at the airport then we are at the end of the phone if you need us.

## Living in the UK

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

**Meeting people:** Sometimes British people come across as being reserved but usually they are kind, helpful and welcoming of visitors. British people usually greet each other with a handshake and use their title and surname, until being invited to use their first names. For example, when meeting a new contact, they may greet saying "Good morning Mr Harris". Due to the coronavirus, greetings changed, and handshakes were not being used, although many people are starting to use this form of greeting again. If you feel uncomfortable doing this, a verbal greeting is perfectly acceptable, whilst maintaining social distancing.

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

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

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

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

## The Weather

The British are known for always talking about the weather and carrying umbrellas! This is because the weather in Britain is always changing and regularly have "four seasons in one day".

Britain experiences different climates from season to season. It can get very cold in the winter and be boiling hot in the summer. However, within each season the weather can also vary significantly. You might unexpectedly experience snow in the spring! However, always prepare for lots of rain all year round.

When you're in Britain, it's a good idea to be ready for these different types of weather. This means carrying sun cream to stop your skin from burning when it's hot, a raincoat and umbrella for when it's raining and lots of warm layers for when it gets cold.

In summer, it can range from 7°C in the morning, to 30°C at midday in the sun.

In winter, it can range from less than 0°C first thing in the morning, to 15°C in the middle of the day. The more layers you have, the easier it is to prepare for all occasions.

Checking the weather forecast before you go out is a good idea too. You can watch the weather report every morning on the television or radio news or by using a weather app on your mobile phone.

## Keeping Safe

We expect your stay in the UK to be a safe and happy one. The UK has a diverse population and is very welcoming. There is lots to do- from visits to art galleries and museums, to a wide range of outdoor activities. However, as is the case in all countries, you need to be aware of how to keep yourself safe just in case you find yourself in a difficult situation:

### Personal safety and the care of valuable possessions and cash / credit cards

When you go out, you should be vigilant of what is happening around you. Keep your belongings close and ideally walk with no headphones so that you can hear traffic and others around you. Try not to use your phone when out and about unless it is necessary as this distracts you and could tempt opportunist thieves. It is best to go out with a friend or adult, rather than alone. Always let your host family know if you are going out and what time you expect to return. If for any reason you are running late. Please let your host family know. Make sure that your host family has your mobile number, and that you have their number in your phone.

Please take care of your valuable possessions, including any money or credit cards. When out, ensure that money and cards are carefully stored, such as in a zipped pocket or bag. This is especially important in crowded areas, as pick pockets may be in operation.

If you lose your debit or credit cards, or think that they have been stolen, then contact your bank immediately who will be able to stop your card.

### In an emergency

In emergencies you can call the police, fire brigade or ambulance on **999**. This number should only be called when there is an emergency. The telephone operator will ask you what service you require and will ask you for some details, such as what has happened, and where you are.

For less urgent issues there are two separate numbers you can call, one for the police, and one for medical advice:

**Police (non-emergencies): 101**

**Medical information NHS: 111**

You can dial any of the above numbers from a landline telephone or mobile phone.

## Safeguarding

If you are ever concerned about your safety, we are here to help. If you have any worries, feel that you have been asked to do something that you feel uncomfortable doing or have



been hurt in any way by another student (often called peer on peer abuse) or an adult, you should tell an adult you trust, even if the person has asked you not to tell anyone. Any concern you raise will be treated seriously.

Aspire Guardians has a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who can be contacted confidentially with any concerns that you have. They are trained to help you. Their details are:

DSL: Mrs Thomas, +44 77542 181244, sthomas@aspireguardians.com

Alternatively, you can speak to any member of the guardianship organisation staff, your host family or staff in school, and they will listen and help you.

Aspire Guardians has a safeguarding policy that is available on our website which explains our procedures in detail.

Where there is a safeguarding concern Aspire Guardians support you and ensure your wishes and feelings are taken into account. We check that students understand the information and are comfortable about how they can raise a concern. We explain how concerns will be treated seriously, and that students can safely express their views and give feedback.

### List of useful contacts

There may be times when you would like advice from organisations, rather than from us. Whilst we would encourage you where appropriate to share with us any concerns so that we can help you, you could also contact the following organisations:

**ChildLine:** Childline is a counselling service for children and young people up to their 19th birthday. You can contact them with any problem or concern. They can be contacted on 0800 1111.

**Local Safeguarding Partnership:** The Local Safeguarding Partnership plays a critical role in protecting the welfare of children and young people in the locality. It is often the first point of contact for any non-emergency safeguarding concerns. The guardianship organisation's Local Safeguarding Partnership is Bath & North East Somerset Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership and they can be contacted on 01225 396312 or 01225 396313.

**The Children's Commissioner:** The Children's Commissioner's role is to stand up for the rights of children. You make contact via their website, <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/about-us/contact> or by telephone: 020 7783 8330.

### Prevent and anti-radicalisation

The ChildLine Website explains radicalisation as follows:

"Radicalisation is when someone starts to believe or support extreme views. They could be pressured to do things illegal by someone else. Or they might change their behaviour and beliefs.

This could happen if they feel:

- isolated and lonely or wanting to belong
- unhappy about themselves and what others might think of them
- embarrassed or judged about their culture, gender, religion, or race
- stressed or depressed
- fed up with being bullied or treated badly by other people or by society
- angry at other people or the government

- confused about what they are doing
- pressured to stand up for other people who are being oppressed.

Someone who has been radicalised might believe that sexual, religious, or racial violence is OK. They may be influenced by what they see online. And they might have links to extreme groups that preach hate like Nazi groups or Islamic extremists like Daesh, also known as ISIS or IS.

Having extreme views can be dangerous. And this can often lead to harmful and illegal activities involving violence, attacks, discrimination or hate - which the person could be arrested or sent to prison for. This can affect them and their future.”<sup>2</sup>

If you are worried about the behaviour of someone you know, or if you think that someone is trying to radicalise you, seek help. Aspire Guardians have members of staff, known as the Prevent Lead, who is trained to deal with any concerns you may have:

Prevent Lead: Mrs Thomas, +44 77542 181244, sthomas@aspireguardians.com

Alternatively speak to a trusted adult in your school, such as the DSL, a member of guardianship organisation staff, your parents or your host family. You could also speak to ChildLine on 0800 1111. If you think someone is in serious danger, you can call 999 for urgent help.

Further information on Prevent, Radicalisation can be found in the Aspire Guardians Prevent Policy.

The ChildLine website has further information that you may find useful: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/>

### **Safe use of the internet, access to Wi-Fi**

The internet is a wonderful tool, providing us with a huge amount of information as well as access to our friends and family who can be many miles away. However, we need to take care to keep safe whilst using the internet as there are some people who are trying to trick us, such as into giving us their personal details. Please take great care whilst using the internet. Your school will teach you how to use the internet safely. It is important that you adopt good online safety practice and report misuse, abuse or access to inappropriate materials.

Good online safety practice includes:

- Not giving out personal details such as addresses and telephone numbers to strangers, even if they say they are your own age
- Not sending digital pictures to strangers
- Not responding to unkind messages- tell a trusted adult
- Never giving out internet passwords to anyone
- Never give anyone any bank account information or send money to anyone
- Following the online safety guidelines that your school teaches you both in and out of school.

Further advice can be found at <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk> or <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/>

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/>

### How to report concerns:

- Tell a trusted adult, such as Mrs Thomas, DSL, your Aspire guardian representative, host family, teacher, or parent.
- If you are worried about online abuse or the way someone has been communicating online you can report them to Child Exploitation & Online Protection command (CEOP) <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre> . CEOP is a law enforcement agency who helps keep children and young people safe from sexual abuse and grooming online.
- You can also call ChildLine who will offer advice and listen to any concerns. Their number is 0800 1111

Please discuss Wi-Fi access with your host family. Some families have packages where they have a limit on the data they may use in a month; therefore, streaming films for example would be inappropriate. Please note that host families may have filters on their internet and may use parental controls to prevent access to inappropriate sites. Some host families may turn off the Wi-Fi at bedtime. You should use your own devices rather than the family's home computer.

### Bullying / cyberbullying

Bullying is unkind and will not be tolerated by your school or Aspire Guardians. If you experience bullying during your stay in the UK, please tell a trusted adult as soon as possible who will be able to help you and make the bullying stop. This would usually be a teacher or your house parent if bullying occurred in school, or your guardian, host family or a member of the guardianship organisation staff if bullying was experienced during your stay with a host family family. Bullies often are unkind because they are unhappy themselves, so by telling an adult they will get the help and support they might need too.

Bullying may include:

- Name calling or teasing
- Making unkind comments on social media or sending unkind messages
- Hurting someone physically
- Stealing items from an individual
- Threatening a person
- Spreading unkind rumours
- Unkindness may happen online- this is called cyberbullying

Your school will provide you with guidance on how to spot and handle bullying. ChildLine also offer some advice for children on bullying and cyberbullying. You can find this here <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/bullying-cyberbullying/>

### Living with a host family

Aspire Guardians expects all their students to be polite and courteous when staying with a host family. As mentioned previously, it is expected that you say “please” and “thank you” when asking for and receiving items. Your host family is not a hotel and the expectation is that you will be included as part of the family. As such, you will be expected to engage with family members, joining them at mealtimes, and possibly helping with chores such as laying the table. Your host family will explain their own house rules with you when you arrive. Please do ask them if you have any questions.

### Mealtimes

You will be provided with three meals a day:

**Breakfast:** Typical food includes cereal, porridge, toast, croissants, fruit, or yoghurt. You may be offered a cooked breakfast such as poached, boiled, or scrambled eggs, or bacon and eggs.

**Lunch:** this is usually a light meal, such as a salad, sandwich, or soup.

**Dinner:** this is usually the main meal of the day and will usually be a two-course meal. The main course will usually be hot. Dinner is usually served around the table and all family members usually attend.

**Snacks:** your host family will provide you with snacks and drinks in-between meals if you so wish. Typical snacks include a biscuit, slice of cake or fruit. Your host family will explain how you can access these.

You should ensure that you have informed Aspire Guardians of any special dietary requirements or allergies. If you have any special requests, please do let your host family know.

Most host families will prepare meals for you (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). You may want to help the family in their meal preparations or cook something yourself. Please do talk to your host family about this and they will advise you how to use the kitchen and the necessary safety rules. If you have your own food that you wish to eat during your stay, please let your host family know so that this can be stored safely (for instance in a fridge if required).

### Use of the bathroom

Students are asked to be respectful of the family routines. If you are sharing a bathroom, please be considerate with the time taken to shower and bathe as others may need to use the facility. Please leave bathrooms tidy. Some families may have limits on the amount of hot water available each day due to their boiler capacity. Please discuss the best times for showering or taking a bath. It is not usually necessary to shower or bathe more than once a day. Please ensure that you lock the door of the bathroom when in use and ensure that you are suitably clothed when travelling to and from the bathroom.

### Laundry arrangements

If you are staying with a host family for more than three nights, they will provide you with laundry facilities. In most cases the host family will undertake to do the laundry for you. Depending upon your age and maturity, the host family may give permission for you to do your own laundry if requested and agreed.

### Homesickness

When you arrive in the UK, you might miss your home, family, and friends. These feelings of missing familiar surroundings and family are perfectly normal and are called homesickness.

Signs that you may be feeling homesick include:

- A strong desire to go home
- Feeling lonely
- Feeling sad
- Feeling anxious
- Lack of motivation
- Loss of confidence
- Feeling depressed
- Experiencing mood swings
- Feeling insecure
- Finding simple tasks difficult
- Physical symptoms, such as headaches and nausea

If you feel homesick please do not worry, there are many people who can help you manage your feelings. Talk to your house parent, teacher, parent, guardian, or any member of guardian staff who will listen and will be able to support you and offer advice. School life will be very busy and there will be many activities arranged to enable you to have fun and make new friends.

### Electrical appliances and safety

Please be aware that electrical appliances need to be handled safely as they can pose a risk of fire if not used appropriately. Specifically, overseas phone chargers and laptop power devices may pose a significant fire risk so if possible, purchase UK versions. Please do ask us for advice on the best appliances to purchase, we are happy to help!

### What to do in a medical emergency

You will be required to register with a doctor whilst staying in the UK. This is usually arranged by the school. If you have private medical insurance, please provide us with the details. Depending on your period of stay, it may also be advisable to register with a dentist.

Please do let your host family or the guardianship organisation know if you feel unwell. They will look after you. This may include making a doctor's appointment for you, or in an extreme emergency taking you to hospital. If you feel unwell at school, please let your house parent, matron, nurse or teacher know and they will look after you.

The National Health Service has a helpline that can be used. This number is 111.

In an emergency, an ambulance can be called on 999.

### Permission for visiting the local area / travelling further afield

Responsible students over the age of 15, with permission from parents may visit the local area alone or travel further afield. At all times, the students must take their mobile phone (fully charged) with them and keep this switched on and provide the host family with where they are going, who with and what time they anticipate to be home.

### Students staying away from the host family

On the odd occasion, you might be invited to stay with their friend, particularly for long holidays. Parent's permission must always be sought in this instance through Aspire Guardians. Host Families, Students and Parents can not make these decisions without Aspire being made aware of the arrangements.

### Curfews and Bedtimes

Aspire Guardians requires parents approval prior to you being allowed to go out alone. We will let your host family know the arrangements and boundaries that need to be followed.

As a guide, students who have permission to go out on their own will be required to return to host families by the following times:

- Age 12 – 14; 18:00
- Age 14 – 16; 21:00
- Age 17 – 18; 22:00

If you are permitted to go out unaccompanied you must take your mobile phone (fully charged) and keep this switched on. Please make sure that you have your host family telephone number saved into your phone. It is important that if you do go out unaccompanied, you let your host family know where you are going and roughly know how



long you will be out. If for any reason you will be delayed, you **must** contact your host family to keep them informed of your whereabouts.

Aspire suggests that student bedtimes should be as follows:

- Students under 14; 21:00
- Age 15 – 16; 21:30
- Age 17 – 18; 22:30

Any deviation to these times should be discussed with parents and host family through Aspire Guardians.

## Student Misbehaviour

For students whose behaviour is deemed unacceptable whilst staying with a host family, Aspire Guardians will enforce sanctions to ensure the safety of the host family and the student. If you are rude, ill-mannered or refusing to engage with the family, the family can give you a verbal warning. They will also give them a reminder of Aspire Guardians' behavioural expectations of how to behave whilst staying with a host family. The host family advised to inform Aspire Guardians in writing of the event that occurred for this verbal warning by email to the DSL.

If misbehaviour is repeated, Aspire Guardians will ask the host family to write a statement detailing the behaviour. The DSL may then need to liaise with your parents and give an official warning to both the parents and the student. This is done to protect both you and the host family and to make sure it is clear that your behaviour was unacceptable and a change needs to be made.

If you still refuse to comply with the host family and your behaviour continues to remain unacceptable, Aspire Guardians will remove you from that host and will source an alternative host, until you can either go back to school or can fly home. This will be put in writing, for the safety and protection of you, the host family and Aspire Guardians. Your parents will cover the costs of moving between host families and the school will also need to be informed.

All final decisions will be made between the DSL and the Director, with an official statement after the events to be held on the Students' file.

## English laws

### Laws regarding the consumption of alcohol

Aspire Guardians does not permit their students to consume alcohol whilst under their care, including when they are staying with a host family. In the UK it is illegal for people under 18 to buy alcohol in a pub, off-licence, shop or elsewhere. In most cases, it is against the law for anyone to buy alcohol for someone under 18 to drink in a pub or a public place.

### Laws regarding the use of drugs and illegal substances

Aspire Guardians prohibits students from using recreational drugs and illegal substances whilst in their care. In the UK you can get a fine or prison sentence if you:

- take drugs
- carry drugs
- make drugs
- sell, deal or share drugs (also called 'supplying' them)

If you are under 18, the police are allowed to tell your parent, guardian or carer that you've been caught with drugs.

### Laws regarding smoking

Aspire Guardians prohibits students from smoking whilst in their care. In the UK, it is illegal to buy cigarettes if you are under the age of 18.

### Laws regarding sexual activity

Aspire Guardians prohibits students from engaging in sexual activity whilst in their care, even if they are over the age of consent. In the UK the age of consent is 16. That means that it is illegal to have sex with someone under the age of 16.

### Laws regarding tattoos and body piercings

- Aspire Guardians prohibits students from having a tattoo or body piercing whilst in their care. In the UK, it is illegal to tattoo a young person under the age of 18, even if they have parental consent. There is no legal age of consent for body piercing and so it is not legal for someone under the age of 18 to have a piercing as long as they have consented to it. Children under the age of 16 cannot legally consent to a genital (or in the case of girls, nipple) piercing, as it is considered to be indecent assault.

These laws are:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act (HSWA, 1974)
- The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (recently amended by the Local Government Act 2003)
- Laws relating to Age and consent
- The Tattooing of Minors Act 1969
- Assault implications
- The Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act (1985)
- Anaesthetics - The Medicines Act (1968)
- Legal exemptions affecting some special treatments.

### Mobile phones

The UK has several network providers. We will be able to help you register with a phone provider and help you purchase SIM cards- please contact us for further details.

Mobile phones are extremely useful devices, especially when you are a long way from home and want to stay in contact with your family and friends. However, it is important that you use them safely. Childline offers useful advice on their website:

- "Use a passcode on your phone: This can help to protect your data if someone tries to steal or access it. Nobody should be able to guess your passcode, so do not set it to something other people will know, like your birthday.
- Keep your phone with you: Store your phone in a safe pocket so that it is hidden from sight. Be careful when you take it out in public places and do not let other people use it unless you know and trust them.
- Do not use public WiFi: Public WiFi may not always be secure, especially in places like cafés. Connecting to it means that someone might be able to monitor the sites or apps you are using.
- Check what data your apps can use: Lots of apps will ask for permission to use your data when you install them. They might want to view things like your location,

contacts, photos and even messages. Be careful about what you agree to and check what permissions your apps have in the 'settings' menu of your phone.

- Add an ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact number to your phone: If you lose your phone or something happens, it can be hard for someone to contact you. Add the phone number of someone you trust, like your parent or carer to your lock screen or on the back of your phone with a sticker.
- Be careful who you add or talk to: When you talk to someone online, you do not always know who they are or whether they're being truthful. If you are talking to someone online, be careful about what you share.
- Think before you share or save something: Once you share a message, photo or video you lose control of it. Someone else can save or screenshot it, and they can share it with other people. Sharing or saving nudes can be illegal.<sup>3</sup>

Please also be courteous when using your mobile phone whilst at your host families. This includes not using it at the mealtime, or when the family are engaging in discussion with you.

You should not ask to use the house telephone unless there is an emergency, or you have agreed this in advance with the host family.

## Travelling around

You may need to travel during your time in the UK. This will include travelling to and from your host family, to and from school, to the airport or any places that you wish to visit. If you require transport please let us know. Transport is usually arranged by your school or guardianship organisation. They use trusted drivers who have had the necessary safety checks. Occasionally guardianship staff or host families may be permitted to provide transport for you. You will be provided with details of who is going to collect you in advance. You will be given the name of the driver and the registration number of the car, along with the time that they will arrive. Please ensure that you are ready at the stated time. Never go with anyone other than the named person/registration number provided, even if they say that this has been arranged with school/guardian. If you are in any doubt ask a trusted adult, such as a member of school staff, or your guardian.

When you are travelling in a car please sit in the back where possible and use the seat belts provided. If you are under 12 and below 135cm in height you will be required to use a booster seat. This is a legal requirement.

If you wish to use public transport, please ask us for permission. We will help you with booking tickets if permission is granted.

The British Council has some useful advice for keeping safe on public transport.<sup>4</sup>

When you are walking or cycling, you need to take care to keep safe.

When walking:

- Use pavements to walk on.

---

3

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/mobile-phone-safety/>

4

<https://esol.excellencegateway.org.uk/content/learners/uk-life/be-safe-uk/staying-safe-public-transport>

- Use Zebra or pelican crossings where possible to cross the road, but do not assume cars will stop if they see you waiting. Make sure that it is safe before you cross.
- Stay alert and listen for bikes and runners- this means not wearing headphones when out walking
- Look both ways to check that it is safe to cross
- If there isn't a safe crossing, find a good place to cross away from parked cars where you can see what is coming on both sides of the road.

The Think!<sup>5</sup> Website provides the following advice for cyclists:

- Ride decisively and keep clear of the kerb
- Look and signal to show drivers what you plan to do, make eye contact where possible
- Avoid riding up the inside of vehicles, as you might not be seen. If a vehicle is indicating to the left, hang back at the junction to reduce the risk of a collision
- Always use lights after dark or when visibility is poor
- Wear high-visibility and reflective clothing and accessories at all times
- Wear a correctly fitted cycle helmet that is securely fastened and conforms to current regulations
- Your local council can help you plan your journey by providing maps showing dedicated paths and routes
- Where possible, try to maintain social distancing when you cycle, for example when waiting at crossings and traffic lights
- Where using bikes (private, docked or dockless) wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands before and after cycling.

### Using Maps on Your Phone

Having access to maps on your phone is really helpful when you don't know the area very well. However, remember that walking around with your phone out advertises that you have an expensive phone to others around you. Aspire recommends to keep your phone out of sight when you are walking if you can.

When you need to check which way to go, make sure you are courteous to other pavement users and move over to the side, to allow others to be able to walk past you. Stand still and look at your phone, then put it away and keep on walking.

### Money and valuables

Aspire Guardians can support you with opening a bank account or sending pocket money for the holidays to school before you leave for the holidays or straight to the host family if preferable. We would need parents' permission to send this to you.

Remember to be discreet with valuables and do your best to keep them out of sight. Do not leave phones, laptops, tablets, purses, wallets or any other valuables out on chairs and tables and do not walk around with phones poking out of back pockets. Do not show off credit cards or large amounts of cash in public.

Consider using a money belt and not wearing valuable jewellery whilst travelling and on days out to tourist attractions.

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.think.gov.uk/cycle-safety/>

## **Keeping your passport, BRP safe and police registration**

Your passport, along with BRP and police registration (where required) are important documents. You should ensure that these are always kept safe. Usually schools will keep these for you but there will be times when you need to travel with them, for instance, when travelling to and from the UK. Please take care not to lose them as this could result in travel delays.

## **Religion in the UK and access to places of worship**

The population of the UK is diverse, and many religions are practised. You may wish to access places of worship during your stay. If so, please let us know, and we will make the necessary arrangements.

## **Learning to drive**

If you are over 17 and planning to spend some time in the UK after your schooling, you may want to learn to drive. You must apply for a provisional licence first and then apply for lessons. When the driving instructor feels you are ready, they will suggest that you apply for your test. There is a theory test and a practical driving test, and both must be passed before you will be awarded your licence. Please let us know if you would like to learn to drive, and if your parents agree, we will help you to make the necessary arrangements. Further information can be found on the government website <https://www.gov.uk/driving-lessons-learning-to-drive>

## **School rules**

Your school will explain to you their rules and expectations of how you should behave. Please pay regard to these expectations when staying at your host family as well.

## **Enjoy your stay**

The most important thing is that we want to make sure that you have the BEST experience whilst in the UK.

Remember, Aspire Guardians are here to help you with any questions or concerns you might have so please do not hesitate to contact us!