

Homestay Handbook



Welcome and introduction from the guardianship organisation

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. welcomes you as part of our network of families that were specially selected to be in loco parentis to our students.

Please take the time to read over this complete document as it holds important information that you will need as one of our families.

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 in the following ways:

General enquiries	
Telephone (office hours 9am-6pm)	07718662748
Email	mariap.totalcare@gmail.com
WeChat ID	tce maria
Emergencies 24/7	
Telephone	Maria Pink 07718662748
Safeguarding concerns	
Designated safeguarding Lead <i>Maria Pink</i>	07718662748

The role of the guardianship organisation, your role as a homestay

The guardianship organisation

Our role as a guardianship organisation with regards to our families are as follows:

- To be contactable 24/7 should you need assistance or to simply ask a question*
- To carry out enhanced background checks on anyone in the household aged 16 and over.*
- To provide you with Chinese speaking mediator should you have difficulty communicating anything to your student.*
- To provide you with assistance should your student need medical treatment (GP/A&E)*
- To carry out home visits at least once a year*

- *To inform you of activities/tuition organised by us for the student via email/text To provide transport to and from airports for departure/arrival information ie. pick up/drop off times of cabs, meeting times and location of coach, if applicable.*
- *To provide educational trips to students*

Your role as a homestay

- *To read and sign the Terms and Conditions, returning them promptly to Total Care Education (London) Ltd. via email at mariap.totalcare@gmail.com To read homestay handbook.*
- *To complete online training for safeguarding, obtaining relevant certificate*
- *To provide truthful and accurate information for DBS check*
- *To inform Total Care Education (London) Ltd. of any changes within the household i.e.. anyone over the age of 16 moving into the house, family holiday dates, any medical emergencies within the homestay.)*
- *To provide students with access to common areas of the house and treat student as part of family.*
- *To provide meals eaten in an family environment*
- *To provide students with house rules*
- *To contact us should there be any concerns with the students.*
- *To drop student off at pick up point when departing the UK or going on an educational trip (this would usually be at school from where the coach will be waiting to depart)*
- *To provide laundry, bed change, room clean and appropriate meals*
- *If for any reason you need to be away overnight, please inform Total Care Education (London) Ltd. and we will arrange alternative accommodation for those nights.*

Looking after and respecting the rights of the student

We host students aged between 12-20. Students of different ages may require different care. For example, younger students will require greater nurturing and supervision during their stay, whereas older students will be more independent and may be allowed to visit the local area on their own. Parental permissions may vary from student to student too. We will explain to you what we expect from you prior to placing any student with you.

One of the most mutually rewarding experiences of hosting an international student is learning about another culture. We ask that all homestays respect the students' own culture, values and background and be mindful that there will be some differences in the way students approach everyday life, such as when greeting others or whilst eating. Likewise, the students may have a different religious belief to the homestay. Again, we ask that you are respectful of any differences.

Loco Parentis

We expect our homestays to exercise the same levels of care as a responsible parent – in loco parentis. This means that you are accepting the day-to-day responsibility for the care of the student whilst they are staying with you.

Codes of conduct

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. has a code of conduct for staff and homestays. Please take time to read through this document as it outlines how staff and homestays are expected to behave whilst working for the guardianship organisation which can be found on our website.

Likewise we have a code of conduct for students. This outlines the expected standards of behaviour for our students. Please read through this as it will help you to understand our expectations which can be found on our website.

Safeguarding

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. is committed to safeguarding and child protection. We have comprehensive policies on safeguarding, prevent / anti-radicalisation, complaints, anti-bullying, missing student, e-safety, data protection that provide further information and outline our procedures. These can be found which can be found on our website. Please ensure that you have read and understood all our policies.

You are required to undertake a basic certificated course on safeguarding. This should be refreshed every three years. We will also provide an annual safeguarding update. This will be via *email*.

Restraint

Usually it will not be necessary to restrain a student, but there may be rare incidences where it required to protect the student or other people. If restraint is used, you should only use lawful and reasonable/ appropriate means of control / contact / restraint to maintain safety and good order in the homestay. Any use of restraint must be reported to the guardianship organisation's DSL immediately. Please note that corporal punishment is illegal and must never be used.

Homesickness

When students arrive in the UK, they might be homesick.

Signs that they 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 your student is showing signs of homesickness, tell them not to worry as there are many people who can help them manage their feelings. Let them talk to you about their feelings, and remind them that they can always talk to their house parent, teacher, parent, guardian, or any member of guardian staff who will listen and will be able to support you and offer

advice. It is best not to encourage them to frequently call home, as this can make the feelings worse. Keeping the student busy and interested in a variety of family activities and discussions may help them settle and feel happier. Please do let us know if you are concerned that your student is suffering with homesickness. We are here to support both you and the student.

How to comfort a student in distress

There may be occasions where your student is upset. For example, the student may be homesick (see above), unwell or experiencing pressure in their academic studies. In such incidences please do not comfort the student physically. It is inappropriate to hug a student as you may comfort your own child, however there are many things you can do to help:

- Listen to the student's concerns
- Offer comforting words and advice
- If you can speak the students' first language, this may help to calm the student
- Please do alert us to the problem and we will offer you support

Curfews and Bedtimes

If a student ask you to leave the house, you should do the following:

- Call us immediately Maria/Pam
- Tell us where they want to go, who they are going with, what time they are going and what time will they be back, means of transport
- We will then confirm with parents if they have given their permission for their daughter/son to go out
- We will get back to you with a yes or no
- The student then has a 30 minute window to be home within the stated time
- This goes for any student of any age

We will inform you whether or not the student you are hosting has permission to go out alone. All students who are permitted to go out unaccompanied by their homestay must take their mobile phone (fully charged) with them and keep this switched on. Please make sure that they have your telephone number programmed into their phone. It is important that if students do go out unaccompanied, that they let you know where they are going and roughly how long they will be out. If for any reason they are delayed, students must contact you to keep you informed of their whereabouts.

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. suggests that student bedtimes should be as follows:

- Ages 12-16 and under 22:30 lights out, all devices off

Any deviation to these times should be discussed with the homestay.

Permission for students to visit the local area / shops / travelling further afield / excursions

- *Visiting local shops (permission may be granted by host family)*
- *Travelling further afield (see above, regardless of age)*
- *Excursion with host family are permitted unless clash with tuition*

- *Excursion arranged by Total Care Education (London) Ltd. will always have staff accompanied*

Students staying away from the homestay.

- *Sleepovers are allowed only with parents' permission*
 - *Sleepovers due to homestay needing to be away will be organised by Total Care Education (London) Ltd. with another homestay within our network. Payments to that homestay for the number of nights will be deducted from the original homestay*
- ### Accommodation requirements.

Homestays should ensure that they provide a comfortable living environment for students. We require our students to be provided with the following:

- A suitable bedroom and social area(s) which are well kept, clean and in good repair, with sufficient natural light.
- Suitable safeguards must be in place to ensure that students have sufficient privacy from other students. Parents should be made aware of students who may wish to share bedrooms and must give consent before the arrangement goes ahead. This will only occur during a sleepover situation.
- Where homestays are using a double bed, only one student is using this facility. Under no circumstances should students share a double bed.
- The rooms should have suitable heating and lighting and there should be access to sufficient supplies of hot water as required.
- Students should have access to a private space to study with a suitable desk, chair and lamp.
- Students should have access to appropriate hanging and drawer space for clothing.
- Students should have access to a bathroom with a lock on the door and either a shower or bath.
- Students should be treated as part of the family, and therefore have access to the communal rooms in the home. They should not have access to family member's bedrooms.

Please make us aware if any member of the homestay is a smoker, or if you have any pets. Students should have the right to opt for a non-smoking and/or non-pet homestay environment.

Please be aware of the need to ascertain the adequacy of your home insurance in respect of hosting international students. The insured (homeowner) should declare all facts to the insurer in order to a) obtain the right cover and b) obtain the right premium.

No more than three students should be placed with the same homestay at any one time, unless in exceptional circumstances. Please ensure that you inform us if you work with other guardianship organisations as we need to check that you are not accommodating more than three students in total when members of an AEGIS guardianship organisation are being hosted.

When students under the age of 16 are in the care of a homestay, no students over the age of 20 should be hosted either by the guardianship organisation or another guardianship organisation working within the same homestay.

Homestays should not host any other paying guests or operate any form of bed and breakfast facility when hosting AEGIS students.

While there are no legal restrictions, homestays are expected to adhere to NSPCC advice on adult supervision and ensure that:

- Students aged 12 and under are not left home alone for a long period of time.
- Students aged 16 and under are not left home alone overnight.
- Students are not left home alone regardless of their age if they do not feel comfortable with this.

Meals and Snacks

We ask that homestays provide students with a full board provision of breakfast, lunch and dinner during their stay, taking account of any dietary needs. In addition, students should be provided with access to suitable drinks and snacks during their stay.

Students should be allowed a dedicated cupboard space and a shelf in the refrigerator and also the means to do some cooking if they wish to, on occasion. Host families should make them aware that this will only be allowed if they leave the kitchen clean after use. It may be useful to show students how to use some of the appliances and what to use to clean them with.

Laundry

Homestays are asked to provide students with suitable laundry facilities if they are resident for more than one night. In most cases the homestay would undertake to do the laundry for the student. Depending upon the age of the students, the homestay may give permission for them to do their own laundry if requested and agreed.

Use of the homestay's car for transport

Any cars used to transport student should be roadworthy with up-to-date tax, insurance, and MOT (where required). If you provide transport using your car for the students in your care, please be aware of the need for adequate comprehensive vehicle insurance and that you should inform your insurers that you will be using your car to provide transport to international students.

Please ensure that all relevant laws relating to the use of child seats or booster seats for under 12s, when the student is below 135cm in height, and seat belts for over 12s or more than 135cm tall are discussed with students and adhered to.

Access to computers and the internet & safe use of the internet

It is most likely that your student will want to access the internet during their stay. We ask that they use their own devices and not the family computer. We have an online safety policy that outlines the main risks to be aware of and what you can do as a homestay to help keep students safe which can be found on our website.

Health and Safety in the Home

We expect all homestays to adhere to our health and safety guidelines:

- A minimum of one smoke alarm should be installed on every storey.
- A carbon monoxide alarm to be installed in any room containing a gas, liquid or solid fuel burning appliance.
- An annual landlord gas safety check to be undertaken by a Gas Safe registered engineer and a copy of the certificate provided to the guardianship organisation.
- The homestay must ensure that the electrical system is safe, e.g. sockets and light fittings are secure and not overloaded and any appliances used by the student are safe.
- The homestay must discuss the possible evacuation routes from the property with students on a regular basis. If doors or windows are locked students must know where to find the key in the event of a fire.
- 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.
- Any matches / lighters should be appropriately stored.
- A basic first aid kit should be available to include, plasters, sterile eye-pad, triangular bandage, safety pins, non-medicated wound dressing, disposable gloves, leaflet giving guidance on first aid.
- Any prescription medication and drugs should be kept safely especially when hosting young students.
- Alcohol should be appropriately stored.
- The homestay should have an awareness of basic food hygiene when preparing meals for students.

We will conduct an initial visit to check that your accommodation is suitable prior to you hosting a student. Thereafter we will visit at least once a year to undertake an annual check. Please let us know immediately if there are any changes in the accommodation you are offering. This includes informing us of any temporary building work that may take place when you are due to host students. In some case the school may also wish to make an annual visit to check the property. You will be made aware of this prior to agreeing to host a student.

Please refer to our separate Welfare, Health and Safety statement which can be found on our website.

Private Fostering

Where Total Care Education (London) Ltd. has any day students under the age of 16 (under 18, if the student has a disability) living with homestays who are not their parent or a close relative for 28 days or more, they must adhere to the regulations regarding private fostering in place within their local area as directed by their local authority.

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. is required to liaise with the school and the homestay to ensure that where possible the local authority are notified of the proposal for a private fostering arrangement at least six weeks before the date on which the arrangement is to begin. Where the arrangement is to begin within six weeks, the local authority is to be informed immediately.

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. will liaise with the school and homestay to explain carefully what is required of them in entering into a private fostering arrangement. This includes explaining that there will be regular visits and meetings with the local authority.

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. has a system in place for recording all correspondence with the local authority private fostering team and securing relevant permissions to share such information as is necessary with the student, parents, agents (where appropriate), homestay and partner school.

In the case of day students over the age of 16, we are mindful of the extended period students will spend with homestays and regularly carry out suitable checks to monitor and ensure their welfare.

Changes in circumstances

You are required to inform the guardianship organisation about any changes to the homestay arrangements.

Expenses and payments

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. ensures that any payments due to homestays are transacted promptly and in line with any contractual agreements in place.

The host family will be paid one week in arrears each Monday for the past week. Payments are calculated Sunday to Sunday

Your contract and cancelling the agreement

*Contracts may be terminated by homestay or Total Care Education (London) Ltd. by giving **one week** notice. Please refer to Terms & Conditions.*

AEGIS

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. is currently seeking accreditation from AEGIS. AEGIS stands for the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students. Their purpose is to safeguard the welfare of international students studying at schools, colleges and universities in the UK, making them feel safe, welcome and cared for. Through a rigorous accreditation process, they provide peace of mind that those offering guardianship services to students meet the very highest standards of care. As part of this process they periodically ask homestays to complete a questionnaire to share their views of our services. They will also ask to visit a sample of our homestays to check that we are adhering to their standards. As part of your agreement to host for us, we ask that you engage in this process when approached by AEGIS.

Responsibilities during a pandemic

Pandemics can cause major disruption to travel and schooling. It is important in such events that Total Care Education (London) Ltd. takes advice from the government, Public Health England and the World Health Organisation. AEGIS also provides guidance for members to follow. This is regularly updated as a situation develops. Usually, in a pandemic it is important to restrict movement so as not to spread the disease further. That means boarding school students would usually remain at school. In the event of a pandemic Total Care Education (London) Ltd. may not be able to offer homestay accommodation as this could

place students, homestay families and the wider community at risk. Total Care Education (London) Ltd. will work with parents to find flights to home countries where required.

Total Care Education (London) Ltd. Will work with schools to meet students' needs during a pandemic. This could be by helping to support students to learn remotely as directed by the school. Total Care Education (London) Ltd. will work with parents and schools to find suitable quarantine accommodation for students where required.

