

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN HANDBOOK**

**FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS  
WORKING TOGETHER AT IH BRISTOL**

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*Please note: these guidelines are adapted from original guidelines created by Nigel Heritage, EFL Consultant, Dorset, 2007 ([heritage.nigel@googlemail.com](mailto:heritage.nigel@googlemail.com))*

## **1. Introduction**

The guidance and procedures in this document are designed to help safeguard young people and reduce the risk of teaching, social programme, pastoral or administrative staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight, however, behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. It also gives explanations for the guidance, in order to help staff reflect on their roles and be able to respond effectively in situations not covered in the sections below.

## **2. Key Definitions**

In this document, the words "children", "young people", "students" and "pupils" all refer to children under the age of 18 years.

The term "allegation" means any information that suggests an adult has caused or may cause hurt or harm to a child or young person.

The terms "senior staff" and "senior colleague" include academic / centre managers, the Principal and DOS, or school directors.

## **3. Underpinning Principles**

1. The welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989).
2. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
3. Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
4. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident which may give rise to concern.
5. Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed in accordance with the school procedure for record-keeping.
6. Staff should apply the same professional standards with students regardless of gender or sexuality.
7. All staff should know the name of their designated person for child protection and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people. This will be explained in staff induction meetings.
8. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

## **4. Duty of Care**

Teachers and other staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources and protect pupils from discrimination and avoidable harm.

All staff have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is partially imposed by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

## **5. Exercising Professional Judgement**

Where no specific guidance exists staff are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.

However, in the case of unusual situations such as accidents, threats from students or major misunderstandings with them, staff should always write down what happened and then discuss it with a manager to ensure that the safest practices are employed and to reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted.

## **6. Power and Positions of Trust**

Staff are in a position of trust with young people and have a responsibility to ensure that they do not use their position for personal advantage or gratification. Staff should not use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine students.

Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others and report to senior staff and record any incident with this potential.

## **7. Confidentiality**

In some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations) and such information should be treated in a discreet and confidential manner.

If staff are in any doubt about whether to share or keep information confidential, they should seek advice from a senior member of staff.

When a member of staff may be expected to share confidential information about a child, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only on a need-to-know basis.

## **8. Propriety and Behaviour**

Staff should not behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model.

Therefore, staff must not, for example:

- make sexual remarks to a pupil (including by email, text messages, phone or letter);
- discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils;
- discuss a pupil's sexual relationships (except where there is a specific welfare issue).

## **9. Dress and Appearance**

When in contact with students, staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as offensive, revealing or provocative could leave themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

## **10. Gifts**

Staff should not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give personal gifts to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

Any reward given to a young person should be part of an agreed reward system and not based on favouritism.

### **11. Infatuations**

It is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop an infatuation. All such situations should be responded to sensitively, to maintain the dignity of all concerned. Staff should also be aware that these circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and of allegations being made.

A member of staff who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with them or a colleague should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.

### **12. Social Contact**

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact outside the classroom with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

Staff should not give their personal details, such as home/mobile phone number, home or e-mail address, to pupils.

### **13. Physical Contact – General Principles**

In general, it is advisable to avoid physical contact with students.

However, if contact becomes necessary, this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Appropriate physical contact in schools may occur most often with younger pupils.

Staff should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child or an observer, so:

- contact should never be secretive;
- staff should never indulge in horseplay or tickling;
- staff should always be prepared to explain actions;
- staff must accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny.

It should be recognised that a number of children who have suffered neglect or abuse may be extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child sensitively by helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Staff should always record and report serious incidents of contact whether by staff member to student or vice versa.

### **14. Physical Contact - PE and other activities which require physical contact**

Some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, will on occasions have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a child so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. If possible, staff should consider using alternatives to physical contact with students, e.g. by demonstrating an action using another member of staff.

### **15. Physical Contact - Showers and Changing**

If staff members are required to supervise students changing or taking a shower (for example, to prevent bullying or to meet health and safety requirements) they should:

- avoid physical contact with students who are in a state of undress
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- where there are changing rooms, announce their intention of entering and avoid remaining in the room unless pupil needs require it.

Adults should not change or shower in the same place as children, e.g. in the same changing rooms in a sports centre.

### **16. Physical Contact - Pupils in Distress**

There may be rare occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. If at all possible, such contact should be given in the presence of another member of staff.

Staff should always tell a manager when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child and record situations which may give rise to concern.

### **17. Physical Contact - Care, Control and Physical Intervention**

The circumstances in which staff can intervene with a pupil are covered by the 1996 Education Act. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others or causing damage to property.

When physical intervention is necessary, staff should remember the health and safety of themselves and the rest of the students in the group.

The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence, so staff should:

- try to defuse situations before they escalate
- call or send a student for assistance when necessary
- use minimum force for the shortest period necessary
- adhere to the school's behaviour management policy

In all cases where physical intervention is deemed necessary, details of the incident and subsequent actions should be written down and reported to senior managers.

### **18. Behaviour Management**

Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools. Equally, staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. In addition, the use of demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

### **19. Sexual Contact with Young People**

According to the Sexual Offences Act 2003, where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence if that person, for their own sexual gratification, engages in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or causes or incites that child to engage in or look at images of sexual activity.

Therefore any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a child or young person in their care is both inappropriate and illegal, regardless of whether or not the child or young person consents or whether they are aware of what is happening or not.

The sexual activity referred to in the Act does not just involve physical contact, but also non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in sexual activity or look at images of sexual activity. In practical terms, staff and host families should therefore ensure that they only show students age-appropriate television/films/video/pictures/video games; showing explicit images of sexual activity to any under-18s would not be appropriate.

While praise for effort and achievement is a normal part of staff-student relationships, staff should be aware of the possibility that conferring excessive special attention and favour upon a child could be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process. This is where an adult attempts to gain the trust of a child and manipulates that relationship so sexual abuse can take place.

## **20. One-to-One Situations - staff**

Staff working in one-to-one situations with children and young people (for example, while doing speaking exam practice) may be more vulnerable to allegations. Teachers and others should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly.

Staff should:

- try to avoid one-to-one situations if possible;
- avoid meetings with pupils in secluded areas of school;
- ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations;
- inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by;
- avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible, since they may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy;
- always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague;
- consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children involved.

## **21. Transporting Children**

In certain situations e.g. out of school activities, staff may agree to transport children. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transporting arrangements and respond to any difficulties that may arise.

Staff should not use their own vehicles for transporting children unless they have informed their own vehicle insurance company that they are using their own vehicle for occasional business purposes.

When using school vehicles, staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. For example, they should ensure that the vehicle meets all legal requirements, is roadworthy and appropriately insured, that students are wearing seatbelts at all times and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. Wherever possible and practicable, it is advisable that students are transported with at least one adult additional to the driver, acting as an escort.

When transporting children, staff should try to avoid being alone with them for longer than necessary. They should also ensure that a senior member of staff is informed before *and after* children are transported on unscheduled journeys, e.g. when students cannot be collected by host families. When relevant, staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of students is their responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent/carer.

## **22. Educational Visits and After School Activities**

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity.

During school activities that take place off the school site or out of school hours, a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

Staff should:

- always have another adult present in out-of-school activities, where possible;
- ensure they have read the risk assessment for the activity and other relevant documents (and in the absence of a risk assessment, do their own) ;
- ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.

## **23. First Aid and Administration of Medication**

All staff should be aware of the identity of trained first aiders/appointed persons on school and residential sites. Staff should receive appropriate training before administering first aid or medication.

Each customer application contains questions asking for details of any medical conditions we should be aware of. Should an application for an U18 contain information on medical conditions, the staff member responsible for the application must discuss with the school Principal (or other senior staff, if absent) who will assess the need for a written medical care plan to be put into place before arrival. It will also be necessary for those senior staff to agree with the staff member responsible for the application that it is possible to cater for the condition(s) in question before the student is accepted.

A first step will normally be to email the parents/agent the 'Medicine and medical condition further information request form' kept in the Admin Manual on the school's Admin drive. This information will help the school to form any Medical Care plan document. The plan will need to be agreed in advance with the school, hosts, or those adults responsible for accommodation during the student's stay, and parents/legal guardians.

Pupils may need medication during school hours. In circumstances where children need medication regularly, staff must consult the student's medical care plan. With the consent of parents, the children should be encouraged to administer the medication themselves. Where students receive medication under staff supervision, each event must be recorded in the School medication record book kept at each site.

If a member of staff is concerned or uncertain about the amount or type of medication being given to a pupil, this should be discussed with the appropriate senior colleague at the earliest opportunity. When administering first aid, wherever possible, staff should ensure that another adult is present, or aware of the action being taken. After administering first aid, the first aider should record the event in the accident book and inform senior staff, so that they can contact the group leader and, if necessary, parents. Accident book records are confidential so give these immediately on completion to the staff member in charge of Health and Safety.

## **24. Intimate Care**

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (for example assisting with toileting or removing wet/soiled clothing). It is envisaged that this will generally only apply to young children.

Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable. When assistance is required, staff should ensure that

another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken. Staff should also explain to the child what is happening.

## **25. Alcohol, smoking and drug use**

U18s are not permitted to drink alcohol or use any non-prescribed drugs, including 'legal highs'. Adults must not supply alcohol or cigarettes to U18 students and they must avoid promoting irresponsible attitudes towards alcohol, smoking and drug use through what they say and do.

Adults in a host family setting should exercise discretion when consuming alcohol. They must not be inebriated in front of U18s and must remain capable of dealing with an emergency or first aid incident at all times.

Adults must ensure that they smoke in a discreet manner away from U18s and that no smoking takes place in vehicles transporting U18s.

## **26. Curriculum**

When selecting topics, teaching materials and activities, care should be taken to ensure that they are appropriate to the levels of maturity, personalities and cultures of the students in the class and that they cannot be misinterpreted. Care should be taken when discussing sensitive topics such as violence or politics. If in doubt about the appropriateness of topics, materials or activities, staff should seek the advice of a senior member of the teaching staff.

Staff should not enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity.

## **27. Online/hybrid classes and social programme**

Teachers and academic managers must follow guidance and procedures set out in the 'U18s Online Code of Conduct and Information Declaration' when managing online/hybrid classes and social programme events which contain students under 18.

## **28. Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts**

Many school activities involve recording images. Staff need to be aware of the potential for these images to be misused for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes. Children who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography, filming etc. in the teaching environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation.

Using images of children for publicity purposes will require the consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the school have access.

When recording images the following guidance should be followed:

- staff should be clear about the purpose of the images and what will happen to them after the activity/lesson;
- staff should ensure that a senior member of staff is aware when, where and why images are being created;
- staff should be able to justify images of children in their possession and ensure that all images are available for scrutiny;
- staff should avoid making images in one-to-one situations;
- if a photograph is displayed publicly, avoid naming the pupil;
- if the pupil is named publicly, avoid using their photograph;
- senior staff should establish whether images used for publicity purposes will be retained for further use;
- images should be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so.

### **29. Internet Use**

Using school time or equipment to access any inappropriate or indecent material, including adult pornography, is unacceptable. Staff should be careful not to access inappropriate content (e.g. emails, websites) in front of students.

Whether at work or at home, accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and, if proven, will invariably lead to the individual being barred from work with children and young people.

Staff should not have contact with U18s online, except through formats which are sanctioned and scrutinised by the School, e.g. emailing homework to a teacher's school email address or responding to a message from an U18 on the School's Facebook page. If teachers create platforms for sharing documents with U18 students, they must send access details to the Designated Safeguarding Person so that these platforms can be scrutinised at any time.

### **30. Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their serious concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion, as described by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Where the welfare of children may be at risk, staff should bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and if necessary, relevant external agencies. Concerns may include any behaviour by other colleagues that raises concern.

### **31. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents**

All staff should know the name of the school's designated member of staff for child protection, or the equivalent individual, and know and follow relevant child protection policy and procedures. All staff have a duty to record and report any child protection concerns to their designated person for child protection.

In the event of an incident occurring, which may result in an action being misinterpreted and/or an allegation being made against a member of staff, the relevant information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to senior staff. Early discussion with a parent or carer could avoid any misunderstanding.

Members of staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with pupils so that appropriate support can be provided or action can be taken.

### **32. IH Bristol provision for under-18 students in unsupervised time**

This section contains a useful summary of the differing levels of supervision which the School has determined is appropriate in different situations. It is divided into two sections: under-18s on junior courses and 16-17-year-olds on adult courses. More detailed provision for staff is explained in the document 'U18 unsupervised time provision (detailed)'.

#### Junior courses

Students can join a junior course as an individual, while others will be coming in a group.

	11–12-year-olds	13–15-year-olds	16–17-year-olds
Arriving in the UK and travelling to Bristol and travelling from Bristol to UK departure point	Students must be accompanied by an adult (the School can arrange a taxi transfer from the airport) or older sibling.	Students must be accompanied by an adult (the School can arrange a taxi transfer from the airport) or older sibling.	Students can travel alone, but the School must be told travel plans and agree they are appropriate.
Travel to and from school for classes, and at weekends for school excursions outside Bristol	11-year-olds must be accompanied by an adult or older sibling/student in their group. 12-year-olds will travel with an agreed older person, or be risk assessed for travelling alone	Students go to and from school unaccompanied	Students go to and from school unaccompanied
Mid-morning break	Students are not allowed to leave the school site at break.	Students are not allowed to leave the school site at break.	Students are not allowed to leave the school site at break.
Lunchtime	Students can go out at lunchtime to local shops if accompanied by an adult or older sibling/student in their group.	Students can go out at lunchtime to local shops but must stay in pairs or groups.	Students can go out at lunchtime to local shops but must stay in pairs or groups.
Travel to and from school for social programme events  (evening events should finish by 8.45pm)	11-year-olds must be accompanied by an adult or older sibling/student in their group. 12-year-olds will travel with an agreed older person, or be risk assessed for travelling alone. Students must return straight home after event, and by curfew time of 9.30pm	Students go to and from school unaccompanied  Students must return straight home after event, and by curfew time of 9.30pm	Students go to and from school unaccompanied  Students must return home by curfew time of 10.30pm
Free time on weekend excursions	Students must be supervised by an adult during free time. This could be a parent, group leader or member of school staff	If appropriate, students can be unsupervised if they stay in a pair or group which has a working mobile phone.	Students can be unsupervised if they stay in a pair or group which has a working mobile phone.
In the home of the host family	A responsible adult must supervise at all times.	A responsible adult must supervise at all times.	Students can be in the home unsupervised, but not overnight.
Going out into Bristol on weekday evenings after school, or at weekends	A responsible adult must supervise at all times.	If the host family agrees to the students' plans for going out, the students can go out, but they must follow their plan, keep in touch with the host	If the host family agrees to the students' plans for going out, the students can go out, but they must follow their plan, keep in touch with the host

	11–12-year-olds	13–15-year-olds	16–17-year-olds
		and be back by curfew.	and be back by curfew.
Travelling independently of the school and/or staying out of host family home overnight  (Parents should contact the school for details of the planning procedure.)	Students can only travel or stay out overnight with supervision of responsible adult, following written plan agreed with parents and the school.	Students can only travel or stay out overnight with supervision of responsible adult, following written plan agreed with parents and the school.	Students can travel without adult supervision, or stay out overnight with adult supervision, but only if following written plan agreed with parents and the school.

### Adult courses

Students aged 16 or 17 can choose to study on adult courses with students aged 18+. On these courses, 16- and 17-year-olds are given more freedom and are expected to behave in a mature way.

1. When students arrive in the UK, IH Bristol recommends a taxi transfer arranged by the school. Students can travel alone to Bristol, but the School must be told about the students' travel plans and must agree to these plans before students travel.
2. Students travel between their host and school unsupervised, including for Saturday trips.
3. Students are unsupervised outside classes including during breaks and at lunchtime.
4. On Saturday trips outside Bristol, students can have up to 3 hours of unsupervised time for eating, shopping and exploring.
5. Social programme events are optional. Instead of going to social programme events, students aged 16 or 17 can go out in the afternoons/evenings unsupervised if they check what they are doing with their host family first and stay in contact with their hosts.
6. Students aged 16 or 17 must return home to their hosts by 10.30pm or the time their host goes to bed, whichever is earlier. This curfew time is not negotiable.
7. If students aged 16 or 17 want to travel independently (not under school supervision), or stay out of their host family's home overnight (with adult supervision), they must get written permission from their parents and the agreement of the School. Please ask the School for details of the procedure.

### **33. Peer-on-peer abuse**

Peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse can happen in and out of school and online.

Staff should recognise that it can take different forms:

- bullying
- abuse in intimate relationships
- violence and threatening violence, including online
- sexual violence and harassment, including sexual comments or jokes
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude images
- upskirting
- initiation rituals ('hazing')

Staff should also understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between peers in order to prevent peer-on-peer abuse from being normalised as part of peer/school culture, which can result in students not reporting it. Any concerns should be reported to the safeguarding team.

## EXTRA GUIDELINES FOR HOST FAMILIES

### 34. Host families being in a position of trust

*Anyone who looks after someone i.e. is caring for, training, supervising or is in sole charge of such persons under 18 is considered to be in a position of trust. This means that for anyone looking after an U18 either of the following can constitute a criminal offence:*

- 1. engaging in sexual activity with or in front of U18s;*
- 2. encouraging U18s to engage in or watch sexual activity.*

The above paragraph has obvious implications for the behaviour of the care givers in host families. Hosts should therefore avoid any behaviour which could be misinterpreted by U18s and lead to allegations being made.

### 35. IH Bristol Abusive Behaviour Policy

This policy is to make sure that all students, staff and host families feel safe and happy at IH Bristol. All students, staff and hosts must follow this policy at all times. Students are made aware of the policy and there are serious consequences for anyone who breaches it.

We do not allow these things at IH Bristol:

- Bullying of any kind (physical, written, spoken or on the internet)
- Racism (against other nationalities, cultures or religions, written, spoken or on the internet)
- Excessive and/or loud swearing
- Sexual harassment of any kind (physical, written, spoken or on the internet)
- Rude or violent actions towards staff, students or visitors (e.g. shouting at other students inappropriately, kicking furniture)
- Stealing other people's property or IH Bristol's property
- Vandalism (e.g. writing on or breaking school furniture, computers, etc)
- Any illegal activity (taking drugs, smoking or drinking underage)

Any breaches should be reported to the DOS/Principal.

### 36. Supervision of U18s in the hosts' home

Here are the levels of supervision required for different age groups:

For all students under 18:

- Hosts should explain potential hazards and fire safety/emergency exits to students on arrival.
- If a host needs to be away overnight so there is no main caregiver at home with a student under 18, the host must let school know well in advance, so IHB can arrange accommodation with another host for that period. At busy times, this may be difficult to arrange, so as much warning/communication as possible in advance is essential.
- If other family members are in sole charge of U18 students, this places them in positions of trust and the behaviour outlined in italics in the section above would be inappropriate and perhaps illegal while the student is in the care of that host family.

For students under 16:

- Hosts must ensure for students under 16 that a responsible adult is always at home with them. It is expected that the named main caregivers will do most supervision, but if they

need to go out for short periods (up to two hours), students must be left under supervision of another responsible adult in the household.

- House keys must not be given to U16s.
- Hosts must ensure they communicate with students and the school if no responsible adults will be home when an U16 student is expected to arrive home. In this case, the student will have to stay at school until the host is able to be home when the student arrives.

For students aged 16-17:

- For 16 and 17 year-olds, hosts can give them a key and students can be in the host's home unsupervised for limited periods of time (but not overnight), if the hosts are happy with this arrangement.

### 37. Students travelling to and from their host's home

Here are IH Bristol's supervision levels for students travelling to and from school:

- Students aged 11 must always be with either a responsible adult or an older sibling/older responsible student from the same group.
- Students aged 12 will be individually risk assessed by the school for the journey to and from school.
- Students aged 13-17 can travel to school alone. However, if a host thinks this is inappropriate, they should contact the school immediately.

Journeys in a foreign country carry an inherent risk, so hosts have an important role to play in helping students stay safe. Please ensure you go through the following guidance with your student before they make their first journeys to and from school.

#### Contact details

Hosts must ensure that students have the host's name and address written down on a piece of paper and in the student's phone. Hosts must also record the student's name and mobile number appropriately. These numbers must be tested to ensure they work. On a student's first day in school, the school will give them a wallet card (which includes the school number and emergency phone number) and ask them to record the host's mobile and address on it. It's a good idea to check if students have their wallet card on them on day 2!

#### Crossing roads

Before students take their first independent journey, hosts must ensure in an age-appropriate way that their student can cross the road safely, bearing in mind the direction of oncoming traffic in the UK.

Please go through this information from our student handbooks with your student:

Bristol is a safe, friendly city, but it's always good to do a few simple things to keep safe:



**Be careful when you cross the road - cars drive on the left!**

Always look RIGHT first to see if you can cross. **Cross the road at a pedestrian crossing if possible.**

When you are walking in the city, **stay on main routes with good lighting and avoid short-cuts and side streets**; especially if you are on your own, it's dark or your hosts have told you not to go somewhere.

### Students travelling by bus

The host should ensure their student catches their bus to and from school successfully. Hosts must show students where to catch and get off their bus (on the route map provided by the school/by driving them along the route/on Google Street View), which numbers of buses to catch and their departure times and arrival times. It may be a good idea to get students to take photos of the host's house/flat exterior, bus stops and the school. Hosts should ensure students have their bus card issued by the school or the means to pay for their bus journey.

Please go through this information from our student handbooks with your student before they use the bus:

1. All First Bus buses in Bristol have CCTV, but if possible, sit on the bottom deck of a double-decker (in the picture), where the driver can see and hear the passengers better.
2. If someone on a bus is making you uncomfortable or unhappy, tell the driver and call your host family/the school.
3. If you are waiting at a bus stop for a bus in the evening, try to wait with another student. If you feel unsafe, call your host family and/or the school.

### Students walking to and from school

The host should ensure their student knows the route before they use it. Again, this can be done using the route map provided by the school, by driving/walking students along the route, or by using Google Street View. Students can take pictures of key locations/waypoints. Please also advise students on which routes are safe and unsafe, if relevant. For example, although it's quicker, it might be much less safe to walk across the middle of the Downs to get to Stoke Bishop in the evening.

## **38. Travelling to and from social programme events**

Here is what hosts need to know to manage students' travel to and from the events:

### Social programme for students aged 11-17 on junior courses

Students on junior programmes are given a sheet with the social programme calendar for the week on the first day of the week and an extra copy for their host. You can also find the calendar on the website (please filter by course type Junior or Adult) <https://www.ihbristol.com/why-ih-bristol/social-programme>. Please use the calendar to agree with students what time you expect them home. Exceptionally, there may be an event scheduled to finish at 8.45pm, but this should still give students enough time to return home.

All classes and afternoon and evening events on junior courses are compulsory and the school will phone you if your student is absent, so please phone the school in advance if your student is unable to attend an evening event. Students who do not attend evening events must stay at home with their hosts.

Here are rules we give students in the Junior Handbook:

- If you are under 16, you must go straight home after social events have finished for the day. If you are 16/17 and you want to stay out before returning to your host's home, you must contact your host to agree your plan with them and agree what time you will return.
- If you are going to arrive home earlier or later than agreed, phone your host immediately to check this is OK. For under-16 students, hosts must be at home when students arrive.

Please ensure students keep to these rules.

### Social programme for students aged 16-17 on adult courses

The social programme calendar is published on our website (please filter by course type Junior or Adult) <https://www.ihbristol.com/why-ih-bristol/social-programme> . Please use the calendar to agree with students what time you expect them home. If an event continues close to curfew, students aged 16-17 must leave the event early, so they can arrive home by curfew.

Here are the rules for students aged 16-17 in the adult courses handbook:

1. If you want to stay out after a social programme event and return to your host's home later, you must contact your host to agree your plan with them and agree what time you will return.
2. If you are going to arrive home earlier or later than planned, phone your host immediately to check this is OK.

Please ensure that students keep to these rules.

### **39. Curfew and absences from host families**

Students should be back home by their curfew time. Here's what the school tells students under 18 in their student handbooks:

1. If you are under 16, you must be back at your host's home by 9.30pm, at the latest. If you are attending a school event which finishes at or after 9.15pm, you **MUST** return home immediately after the event.
2. If you are 16 or 17, you must be back at the host's home by 10.30pm or the time that the host goes to bed if this is earlier.
3. If your host wants you to return home earlier than curfew for other reasons - age, location of their home, darkness, public events etc. - you must follow their instructions.

There can be no exceptions to these curfew times and parents/guardians agree to this in the parental agreement.

Please note: for guardians/parents staying with their children in Bristol: for operational/safeguarding reasons, we will operate with the same curfew time for all U18s and expect parents/guardians to do the same if student is studying with us.

If students are unexpectedly absent before curfew, hosts should try to contact the student by mobile and, if unsuccessful for 30 minutes, phone the school during working hours, or the emergency phone (0117 208 210) outside school hours.

Procedure for homestays when students breach curfew:

1. Five minutes after curfew has passed, hosts should phone/message their student to find out situation.
2. If no contact is possible with student, wait until up to 30 minutes after curfew time, then phone either social programme phone or emergency phone and explain the situation. If it is not possible to contact the emergency phone after repeated attempts, then hosts should consider phoning the police and following their guidance.
3. If your student is repeatedly breaking curfew or you have any concerns, please tell a manager at the school, e.g. Pete Gibson, the Principal ([pete@ihbristol.com](mailto:pete@ihbristol.com)).

#### 40. Students doing activities independently of school - supervised or unsupervised by hosts

As part of their duty of care, hosts need to consider the level of risk for a supervised/unsupervised activity for their individual student before deciding on its appropriateness and the level of supervision required, e.g. going to an activities centre with the host family or attending the Bristol Balloon Fiesta with other students. The level of risk will depend on factors such as the student's age, gender, emotional maturity, life experience, physical abilities, attitude to risk and awareness of UK culture and norms.

Here's IH Bristol's supervision provision for students doing activities independently of the school:

- 11-12s should always be accompanied by an adult or older sibling/student from the same group (except for a journey to and from school for 12 year olds, risk-assessed by the school).
- 13-15s can go out to do activities unaccompanied, provided homestays agree that their plans are appropriate, they are meeting school friends (not alone), they stay in touch with the host and they abide by any conditions the hosts give.
- 16-17s: can go out to do activities unaccompanied, provided homestays agree that their plans are appropriate, they stay in touch with the host and they abide by any conditions the hosts give.

The School uses formal risk assessments for their activities and while this is not expected for host families, they should nevertheless consider a number of questions before giving them permission to do activities with limited or no host family supervision. Some of these questions are often most relevant for 16/17 year-olds, who may consider themselves adults, and therefore may exhibit more risk-taking behaviour.

##### Considerations checklist:

###### Travel/transport

1. Who will the student be travelling with and for what stages of the journeys to and from the destination venue?
2. Is the student's means/time of travel and route safe? Does the student have the language, knowledge and experience to stay safe, e.g. when using buses/crossing roads/avoiding certain areas? If not, what alternatives would work?
3. Could travel conditions affect the student's safety, e.g. weather, time of day/evening, amount of light?
4. Is it likely the student will get lost/assaulted/pickpocketed/verbally abused? If so, what alternative routes/transport methods can be used?
5. What would the student do if they got lost?
6. Do students have a record of the host's address, enough money, relevant information and enough English for a taxi/bus/phone call if needed?
7. What time does the student plan to return? Is the time appropriate for the hosts' bedtime routine/too close to curfew? Will the hosts be in/aware of their return in order to check that they are OK or if they have been drinking/taking drugs etc?
8. Do students know they must contact the hosts if they are going to be delayed?

###### People accompanying your student

1. Is the student going out to do an activity alone? (This should not happen for students under 16 and is not usually advisable for students under 18.)
2. Who is the student going to do the activity with? How old are they? How does the student know them? How old/mature are these people? How would/could these people help if the student had a problem? Are they likely to encourage/discourage risk-taking behaviour?
3. Should the host get the accompanying people's contact details?
4. When/where will the student meet/leave them? Will the student be safe before they meet/after they separate?

### Activity/venue

1. What activities is the student planning to do?
2. Does the student have enough language/experience/physical ability/maturity/knowledge of UK law/money for the activities?
3. How safe/appropriate are the activities and the venue? How great are the risks of injury/abuse/assault? Will they be supervised by responsible adults?
4. Are there any other activities going on in the area which could affect the student's safety, e.g. demonstrations, football matches?
5. Could the student have the time/opportunity to do other inappropriate activities instead of the activities they have told their hosts about? If so, how could the host ensure that the student is at the planned venue, doing what they say they will do, if necessary?
6. Will the student have access to adequate food/water/toilets/medication? Does the student have significant dietary requirements and can they manage these when getting food for themselves?

### Contingencies

1. Does the student know they must contact the host to liaise with them about any changes of plans?
2. Does the student have enough language, knowledge and experience to deal with unexpected problems or make their needs known in an emergency?
3. Does the student have contact numbers for the host/school emergency phone/emergency services and the language skills to contact any of these?
4. Is the student have any important medicines/medical information/medical plan that should be known/used in an emergency? Could this information be accessed by the emergency services if the student became unconscious?
5. Will the student have enough power and credit in their phone to last for the time they are out of the host's home?
6. Does the student have enough money for the activity **plus** any contingencies, for example, money for a taxi home?
7. Does the host have the contact information to get in touch with their student/their companions, if necessary?
8. Does the host have the school's contact information in the event of an incident? (The school's emergency phone number is: 07808 208 210.)

If you agree to your student going out, they must still follow these rules from their handbook:

1. Before leaving the host's home, make sure that:
  - a. you get permission from your host and the host knows what you will be doing and who you are with;
  - b. you know the time for the main evening meal;
  - c. your host knows what time you plan to be back;
  - d. you have the correct contact details for your host;
  - e. if you are allowed to go out unsupervised in the evenings, you must meet your friends, NOT go out alone.
2. You must give your host your mobile number and have their number and address. Make sure you keep your mobile on and it has enough battery and credit for your journey home. You must answer your mobile when your host calls.
3. If you change your plans or you are going to arrive home earlier or later than planned, phone your host immediately to check this is OK.
4. Meals with the host are important and you must try to be there.

There is more scope for student independence for students aged 16-17, but students must be open with their host about their movements and keep in touch with the host. If hosts have any concerns/incidents, e.g. if a student goes out without checking their plans with the host or the host suspects they have been drinking, please contact the school.

#### **41. Transporting students in host family cars**

Please remember, as per the Hosting Terms and Conditions, hosts must inform their motor insurers in advance that they intend to use their car for occasional business purposes if transporting IH Bristol students. IH Bristol cannot be held responsible for any damage or injury.

All U18s must wear seat belts in vehicles.

#### **42. Trips outside Bristol/overnight stays not under host family or School supervision**

Students must get permission from the School before they go on trips outside Bristol or stay overnight unsupervised by host families or the School. If a student announces their intention to do either, hosts should tell them to contact the School to obtain permission for this. The School will have to obtain written permission from the student's parents/guardians using the proforma available from our website and must in addition be satisfied that the trip is appropriate and safe. The School will then contact the host family to confirm that the student can go on the trip.

#### **43. One-to-one situations - hosts**

While host family members may be in one-to-one situations with U18s, they should ensure that their interactions are appropriate and justified and that any undue proximity is avoided, so that U18s feel comfortable and hosts are not made vulnerable to allegations.

#### **44. Student contact with visitors to hosts' home**

The host must take responsibility for any house visitors to ensure that they behave appropriately around U18 students, and that the students are safeguarded. Please introduce your guest to the student; inform your guest about the key safeguarding points in this document (appropriate to length of visit and including points such as never in students' bedrooms); monitor and intervene should the visitor not behave appropriately. Finally, do not leave visitors and the student alone in the house together.

#### **45. Private fostering arrangements**

if a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for 28 days or more by someone who is not their parent or a close relative this is deemed a private fostering arrangement and Children's Social Care for the relevant area has to be notified. If this is the case for a host family, the School will liaise with them to ensure that Social Care are informed.

#### **46. Medical conditions/learning difficulties**

When registering their children as students, parents are required to inform the School about any medical conditions or learning difficulties that their children have. The School will pass on this information to hosts before the student's arrival, so if hosts discover that their student has any conditions or difficulties that the School has not informed them about, hosts must tell the School as soon as possible.

Before a student's arrival, the School will draw up a care plan for that student, if needed. This will be discussed and agreed with the host family before the student arrives. Once again, if a student has medical or care needs that are not part of the agreed care plan, hosts must inform the School as soon as possible.

If students need any medical attention from a healthcare professional, they should be accompanied by a responsible adult, which will normally be a host care giver outside school hours. Hosts must pass on details of the medical attention required to the School, where the student has given their consent to this information being shared.

#### **47. Student privacy**

Students are entitled to reasonable levels of privacy. Except in an emergency, when entering the student's bedroom via a closed door, hosts should 'double knock', i.e. knock, wait and knock again before entering the room, in case the student is undressed.

Hosts must not enter a bathroom or toilet when it is occupied by a student and hosts must be appropriately covered at all times when students are present.

Students must not have other people in their bedrooms, except with the permission of the host family.

It is, of course, appropriate in the absence of the student for hosts to enter a student's room in order to clean it and check on the condition of its contents. If hosts find inappropriate objects in the student's room, then this should be reported to the School.

If hosts suspect theft or that students possess inappropriate objects or substances, then it may be necessary for hosts to search student's personal property. Whenever possible, this should be done after prior consultation with the School.

There are legal restrictions regarding searching an U18, so unless a host believes that there may be a serious risk of harm to someone, they should consult the School before searching a student.

The government has produced the following advice for maintained schools:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/444053/Searching\\_screening\\_confiscation\\_advice\\_Reviewed\\_July\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444053/Searching_screening_confiscation_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf) . In an emergency it may be best to phone the local police to get their advice on the legality of and appropriate conduct when searching a student.

#### **48. IT and social networks**

Supervision of IT use in the host family home should be age-appropriate. Hosts should ensure that, where possible, family IT devices and/or routers have parental controls activated, although some students may be adept at getting round these controls. Hosts should also ensure that students cannot access any inappropriate material stored on the host family's IT devices.

If hosts become aware that students are accessing inappropriate content (e.g. extremist websites), this is a safeguarding issue and they should contact the School to discuss the situation. Similarly, if students are using IT at inappropriate times (e.g. playing games late into the night), they should discuss this with the student and, if necessary, with the School.

**49. Handbook revision record**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Section</i>	<i>Revision</i>
21/06/16	25	Section on Alcohol, smoking and drug use added.
21/06/16	31-42	Extra guidelines for host families added.
26/06/19	19	More detail about sexual activity and reference to updated legislation
January 2022	32	'IH Bristol provision for under-18 students in unsupervised time summary' added
January 2022	35	IH Bristol Abusive Behaviour Policy added
January 2022	33	Peer-on-peer abuse summary added
January 2022	36	Supervision of U18s in the hosts' home updated
January 2022	38	Travelling to and from social programme events added
January 2022	39	Curfew and absences from host families amended
January 2022	40	Students doing activities independently of the school supervised or unsupervised by hosts added
January 2022	44	Student contact with visitors to hosts' home added
January 2022	27	Addition of section on 'Online/hybrid classes and social programme'