

# UKEI Student Handbook



## WELCOME TO THE UK

Thank you for choosing UKEI as your educational guardian in the UK. We have over 10 years' experience of helping Chinese students achieve success in the UK boarding schools. We have staff who speak fluent English, Mandarin and Cantonese, providing 24/7 support for students away from their families.

### Our Support

We provide a bespoke service to students, including a 24/7 contact helpline while you are in the UK, day to day enquiries, help with applying for student visas, airport transportation, attending parent evenings, arranging homestays and tuition assistance during school holidays.

### Our Homestays

You will be welcomed as part of the host family. Our homestays provide a safe and comfortable place for you to stay, taking care of your daily needs during school holidays. Our homestay families have safeguarding training and government background (enhanced DBS) checks. They provide a clean and comfortable family living environment with good quality food and your own room, internet and study facilities. While you are stay in the homestay family, we will still be responsible for you, and you can contact us if you find anything you need talk to us.

## Your responsibilities as a student

We make sure that you focus on your studies, and our Student Behaviour Code of Conduct outlines the positive behaviour we expect from students. Please review it, some guidelines are included relevant sections of this handbook.

## Contact Details

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

- Phone/WhatsApp: 07485161779/07485161765 (24/7 for enquiries or emergencies)
- Email: [m.jiang@ukei.org](mailto:m.jiang@ukei.org) / [james@ukei.org](mailto:james@ukei.org)
- WeChat: maggiejiang2012

Our designated safeguarding lead is Maggie/Ming Jiang

## Arriving in the UK

You will be given this handbook before you arrive UK, please remember your passport and any other relevant paperwork to enter UK, such as your Biometric Residence Permit. Your school or UKEI will arrange transportation for you from the airport. A driver will meet you in the Arrivals Hall, displaying your name. You will also be sent his/her phone number before departure. Note that the UK international phone code is +44, so “077nnn” in the UK is “004477nnn” from a non-UK phone.

Please contact us on 07485161779 or 07485161765 if you are not able to find your driver. It is very important for you to stay in the airport until you meet the driver, as you are not permitted to leave the airport alone or with anyone who is not your designated driver.

## 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 and interesting, and an important part of your learning experience. 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 often 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 have changed, and handshakes are often avoided.

**Queues:** The 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 very 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 or around 1m. 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. You will be informed of any current rules relating to Covid 19.

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! The 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 meal 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.

## Keeping Safe

We expect your stay in the UK to be a safe and happy one. The UK has a culturally diverse population and most people have travelled abroad and are very welcoming. There is lots to see and do, including art galleries, museums, sport, cinema, theatre and shops. However, as is the case in all countries, you need to be aware of how to keep safe just in case you find yourself in a difficult situation:

### Personal safety and the care of valuable possessions and cash / bank 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 homestay family know if you are going out and what time you expect to return, and tell them if for any reason you are running late. Make sure that your homestay family has your phone number, and that you have their number in your phone.

Please take care of your valuable possessions, including any money or bank 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 pickpockets may be in operation. Only take what you think you will need for a trip. You don't need to have your passport with you, but a photocopy might be useful. You might need to show proof of your age as some activities or purchases are age-restricted.

If you lose any bank cards, or think that they have been stolen, 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. Contact us first. 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 or an adult, you should tell a trusted adult, even if the person has asked you not to tell anyone.

UKEI has a designated safeguarding lead (DSL), Maggie/Ming Jiang, who can be contacted at any time on the numbers listed above with any concerns that you have.

Alternatively, you can speak to your homestay family or staff in your school, and they will listen and help you.

UKEI has a safeguarding policy that is available on our website. This explains our procedures in detail. ([www.ukei.org](http://www.ukei.org))

### 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. UKEI's Local Safeguarding Partnership is Leeds MASH and they can be contacted on 0113 376 0336 or [ChildScreening@leeds.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ChildScreening@leeds.gcsx.gov.uk)

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 / 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>1</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. UKEI has a member of staff, known as the Prevent Lead, who is trained to deal with any concerns you may have:

Prevent Lead: MS Maggie Ming Jiang, Contact number 07485161779

Alternatively speak to a trusted adult in your school, such as the DSL, a member of guardianship organisation staff, your parents or your homestay. You could also speak to Child Line 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 UKEI Prevent Policy. You can find this from company website [www.ukei.org](http://www.ukei.org)

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
- ✓ 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/>

How to report concerns:

- ❖ Tell a trusted adult, such as UKEI DSL, your guardian, homestay, 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 homestay. 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 homestays may have filters on their internet and may use parental controls to prevent access of inappropriate sites. Some homestays 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 UKEI. If you experience bullying during your stay in the UK, please do 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, homestay or a member of the guardianship organisation staff if bullying was experienced during your stay with a host family. Bullies often are unkind because they are unhappy themselves, so by telling an adult they will be helped 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 homestay family

UKEI expects all their students to be polite and courteous when staying with a homestay family. As mentioned previously, it is expected that you say “please” and “thank you” when asking for and receiving items. Your homestay 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 homestay will explain their own house rules with you when you arrive. Please ask them if you have any questions – naturally there will be cultural differences that are interesting, but also strange and confusing!

### Mealtimes

You will be given 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 homestay family will explain how you can access these.

You should ensure that UKEI is aware of any special dietary requirements or allergies. If you have any special requests, please do let your homestay know.

Most homestays will prepare meals, but you may want to help or cook something yourself. Please do talk to your homestay 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 homestay family know so that this can be stored safely.

### 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 homestay for more than one night, they will provide you with laundry facilities. In most cases the homestay will undertake to do the laundry for you. Depending

upon your age and maturity, the homestay 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 UKEI, your host family, house parent, teacher, parent, guardian, or any member of UKEI 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 opportunities 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 or international adaptors. 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 homestay family or UKEI staff 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 / shops / travelling further afield / excursions

#### Curfew / bedtimes

Students who have permission to go out on their own will be required to return to homestays by the following times:

- Ages 15 and under     17:00



- Ages 16-18 19:00

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. It is important that if students go out unaccompanied, that they let the homestay know where they are going and roughly how long they will be out. If for any reason they are delayed, students must contact the homestay to inform them.

UKEI suggests that student bedtimes should be as follows:

- Ages 14 and under 20:30
- Age 15 - 17 21:00
- Age 18- 20 21:30

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

### English law

**Alcohol** UKEI does not permit their students to consume alcohol whilst under their care, including when they are staying at a homestay. 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.

**Drugs and Illegal Substances** UK law prohibits the use of recreational drugs and illegal substances, and you can get a fine or prison sentence or be deported to your home country if you:

- take drugs
- carry drugs
- make drugs
- sell, deal or share drugs

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

**Smoking** UKEI 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.

**Sexual Activity** UKEI 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.

### Tattoos and Body Piercings

UKEI 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 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.

### 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 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>2</sup>

Please also be courteous when using your mobile phone whilst at your homestay. 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 homestay telephone unless there is an emergency, or you have agreed this in advance with the homestay.

### Travel

You may need to travel during your time in the UK. This will include travelling to and from your homestay, to and from school, to the airport or any places that you wish to visit. If you

---

2

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

require transport, please let us know. Transport is usually arranged by your school or UKEI. They use trusted drivers who have had the necessary safety checks. Occasionally guardianship staff or homestays 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/ car 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. It can be found here:

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

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

When walking:

- Use pavements to walk on.
- Use pedestrian 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, scooters and joggers - this means not wearing headphones when out walking
- Look both ways to check that it is safe to cross: it will take a little time to adjust to the UK roads where vehicles drive on the left
- 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>3</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.

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.think.gov.uk/cycle-safety/>

- 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.

### Managing your money

We usually provide petty cash management for students when they need emergency service, we will pay for students for any reasonable purchase under 50 GBP, we will seek parents' permission if any purchase over 50 GBP.

We will help you set up a bank account if required. Please contact us and we will be able to make the necessary arrangements.

### 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 do 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 homestay as well.