



PRESTIGE
GUARDIANS



PARENTS
HANDBOOK

Prestige Guardians Ltd.

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Welcome to Prestige Guardians! This Handbook has been produced for parents of students from abroad and contains information on Prestige Guardians organisation, policies and procedures.

Message from Leonor Liz-Losada, Director

Welcome to Prestige Guardians!

Prestige Guardians is a private family run and owned company. We have looked after the interests of many students and their families during the last 8 years and we can offer you the service you want, expect and need.

We have a lot of experience and constantly work very hard every day to make sure all is well with the students we represent. Homestays, flights, visas, mobile phones, storage of luggage, transport, airport transfers, exeat weekends, extra tuition, and half terms are just some areas we deal with every day on behalf of students and their families from many different countries and many different schools. We are here too when occasional problems arise and that is when our experience and knowledge and 24hr access really come into effect.

I know as a past teacher and Deputy Head just how important it is to get everything right.

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1. Guardianship and UK law

The Law

UK law requires that all boarding schools “promote and safeguard” the welfare of every boarding student, including those over the age of 18. The Home Office, responsible for issuing VISAs, must also have regard to the need to safeguard children and to promote their welfare. All children studying in the UK must therefore have suitable care arrangements in place for their travel, reception on arrival in the UK and living arrangements while here. This is a **compulsory requirement** and includes the need for an Educational Guardian to be appointed.

During the term time, boarding schools must comply with the “Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards” in the care of their students, and they are regularly inspected. However, there are times when the school is closed and as **sponsors** of the Tier 4 (Child) VISA, a boarding school must also be able to hand over parental responsibilities to another adult. These times include Fixed “Exeat” weekends, Half Terms, suspensions, exclusions, medical emergencies, weather extremes and other unforeseen circumstances.

Guardian Requirements of a Boarding School

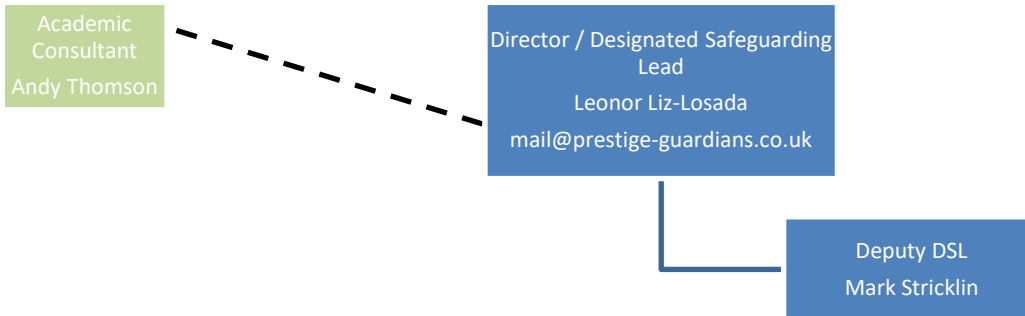
It is a condition of entry to a school that a parent nominates a guardian who will meet the following minimum requirements:

- Be over 25 years of age.
- Reside in the UK at all times and be able to reach the school within 2 hours travelling time.
- Be a 24-hour point of contact for the school.
- Act with delegated parental authority in the case of emergency.
- Provide both pastoral and educational support.
- Liaise with the school over holiday and exeat weekend arrangements, including informing the school about travel and accommodation, which must be appropriate depending on the age of the student.
- Provide appropriate overnight full board accommodation and care.



2. Prestige Guardians and how we are organised

The following chart shows you how **Prestige Guardians** is organised:



(a) **Director**

Leonor Liz-Losada, Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), acts as the guardian to all students registered with **Prestige Guardians** and will take ultimate responsibility for any decision that needs to be made. She is assisted by staff who work closely with her, the school and the student.

(b) **Additional Staff**

In addition to the Director, we have a number of additional staff. Mark Stricklin is our Deputy DSLs. We also have an Academic Consultant, Andy Thomson



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 in the following ways:

General enquiries	
Telephone (office hours 08:30-17:30 Monday to Friday)	+44 (0)1225 859998
Email	mail@prestige-guardians.co.uk
Emergencies 24/7	
Telephone	+44 (0)7551 081009
Safeguarding concerns	
Designated safeguarding Lead	Leonor Liz-Losada
Deputy Designated Lead	Mark Stricklin

3. Safeguarding and Prestige Guardians' Policies

Prestige Guardians 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 under "Quicklinks" on our website – www.prestige-guardians.co.uk

Your child's responsibilities as a student

Prestige Guardians has a Student Behaviour Code of Conduct, later in this handbook, which outlines the positive behaviour it expects from students.

4. Useful information for parents

Emergencies

Prestige Guardians will respond to any requests to provide emergency support and accommodation for students. For example, this could be due to a medical issue or suspension. Where this



is required suitable homestay accommodation will be found until alternative educational arrangements can be made, or until the student returns home.

Transport Arrangements

Prestige guardians and the school arrange transport to and from airports and you should comply with any instructions they issue. Please ensure your child has all necessary documents and paperwork, such as passport and Biometric Residence Permit.

Change of plan?

There may be occasions when you need to change the arrangements that have been made for a half-term, holiday, or other periods. For example, your child may wish to remain in UK beyond the school end date. Please ensure that you contact us as soon as possible, and no later than two weeks before the required date. We will attempt to meet your and your child's needs for transport.

Expenses

It is expected that most expenses incurred by your child while in UK will have been planned for, but there may be occasional unforeseen expenses. You agree to pay for any additional authorised (or when necessary, unauthorised) expenses in relation to your child. Prior written authorisation will be obtained where possible.

Life in the UK

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

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

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 rude to push in. Some shops and services have clear instructions and markers to show where shoppers should stand. Please explain to your child that they should respect the instructions given.

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



Sorry! 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 diner has finished. It is not considered polite to eat with your mouth open or speak whilst eating. Similar to the beginning of the meal, diners usually wait until everyone is finished before leaving the table, and often time is spent having a chat around the table.

Canceling the agreement

Your agreement with us may be cancelled in one of two ways:

- By you, on giving one full term’s notice period.
- By us immediately, on giving notice to you where your child’s behaviour becomes in our reasonable opinion, uncontrollable or where your child commits an unlawful activity.

BSA

Prestige Guardians is currently seeking full accreditation from the Boarding Schools Association (BSA). 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 parents to complete a questionnaire to share their views of our services. We would be extremely grateful if you cooperate with this request when asked.

Student Finances

It is expected that you will have dealt with your child’s pocket money directly with the child, or that the school takes responsibility. However, we can assist to a small degree by helping you set up a bank account and arranging credit cards for your child if required. Please contact us and we will be able to make the necessary arrangements.

Liability

Please note that and Prestige Guardians will not be liable for any damage arising from conduct and/or behaviour of any student.

Responsibilities during a pandemic

Pandemics can cause major disruption to travel and schooling. It is important in such events that Prestige Guardians takes advice from the government, Public Health England and the World Health Organisation. BSA 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 Prestige Guardians may not be able to offer homestay accommodation for your child as this could place students, homestay families and the wider community at risk. Prestige Guardians will work with you to find flights to home countries where required. Prestige Guardians 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. Prestige Guardians will work with you and your child's school to find suitable quarantine accommodation for students where required.

Mobile phones

Students **MUST** make sure that **Prestige** have their current mobile phone number and to keep their mobile phones charged, with some credit and switched on when travelling in the UK. Good communications can save hours of anxiety and time in the event of delay, cancellation or the unforeseen.

What happens if the student is ill?

If a student is ill or has an accident, the school will arrange any treatment necessary. If in doubt, the first course of action is to take the student to the family doctor (as a visitor, as the student will be registered with the NHS via the school doctor). If the illness is more serious and/or hospitalisation is required, **Prestige** must be informed and we will liaise with the parents and school on the most appropriate course of action.

What to do if you have a concern or complaint or you are unsure on what to do

If there is a concern of any kind about a student, or a parent is unhappy about any aspect of our service, then please ring 01225 859998 during office hours (or 07551 081009 in the event of an emergency) or email mail@prestige-guardians.co.uk. If you remain concerned, please contact Leonor Liz-Losada (Director), who will respond to any issue with urgency and in confidence, if required.

The Internet

There are dangers to young people of unrestricted access to the internet, but the demand for access makes it impossible for **Prestige** to supervise or police. Therefore, the responsibility for internet use and downloads rests with the student and we cannot accept any liability in this respect.

Terms and Conditions and Data Protection Policy

Full Terms and Conditions and other policies can be found on our website.



5. FAQs – Frequently Asked Questions by parents

Who is guardian to my child?

Leonor Liz-Losada takes overall responsibility.

Who will meet my child at the airport?

Prestige Guardians or the school arranges all transport to and from the point of arrival into UK.

Who is my main contact at Prestige Guardians?

Leonor Liz-Losada

Who do I contact in an emergency?

Prestige has a 24-hour mobile number, manned by the Director or her deputy, in case of emergencies. We can access emails and the database remotely to ensure the best possible care at all times.

Why should I choose Prestige Guardians?

We do not promise what cannot be delivered. However, our philosophy is to always do everything we can to ensure the care and welfare of our students.

What services are included when I register my child with Prestige Guardians?

24-hour emergency cover: Your guardian can be called upon in the case of an emergency; for example, in the unfortunate event of a student needing to go to hospital or if a student is unable to remain at their school over school at night for any reason.

Airport transfers: We are happy to arrange airport transfers using experienced reliable drivers we know and trust.

Arrange homestays: As part of the ongoing support to the students we take care of, we, arrange vetted host families for our students to stay over school breaks/emergencies.

Arrange appointments: As part of the ongoing support to the students we take care of, we, in conjunction with the school, arrange doctors/dentist appointments as and when they are required.

Arrange UK phone/ SIM cards: We will assist students in finding a suitable phone SIM cards and top-ups for international students studying in the UK.



Additional Services

Accompanied visits: When there are unforeseen circumstances where a student requires the accompaniment of the guardian, we are there to help.

Typically, this service is needed when:

1. a student is unwell and needs to be taken to the doctor/dentist;
2. universities are offering open day visits;
3. accompaniment to embassies is required if visa problems occur.

Behaviour Code of Conduct

This section of the Student Handbook outlines the positive behaviour it expects from students. It also provides information about specific laws in the UK. The aim is to provide guidance in key areas of Prestige Guardians expectations. The guidance is written for the benefit of students, parents and staff.

Laws regarding the consumption of alcohol

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

Laws regarding the use of drugs and illegal substances

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

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

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

Laws regarding smoking

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



Laws regarding sexual activity

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

Laws regarding tattoos and body piercings

Prestige Guardians prohibits students from having a tattoo or body piercing whilst in their care. In the UK, it is illegal to tattoo a young person under the age of 18, even if they have parental consent. There is no legal age of consent for body piercing, and so it is 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's considered to be indecent assault.