



Wimbledon School of English London

Guidelines for Hosting under 18s

Wimbledon School of English primarily caters for students over 18 years old, but we do also accept under 18s. They are bright, lively and cheerful, and a pleasure to have in school.

We ask all parents of under 18s to complete our Under 18 parental consent form. This specifies by what time they have to be home at night, plus what activities they can and can't join. You will be given a copy of this form for any under 18s staying with you. Please inform the school immediately if they break any of the rules, and we will take disciplinary action. Please also inform us if your under 18 is breaking the law by smoking or drinking alcohol or if you suspect they might be using illegal drugs. We give our under 18s a special information sheet on their first day – see p 3 of this document. We also give their parents the following information:

'Whilst we welcome students aged 16 and 17, it should be understood that we do not provide 24 hour supervision, and under 18s will be expected to travel between the school and the host family unsupervised. Under 18s are not supervised during their free time, e.g. between the end of their lessons at the school and returning to their homestay'.

If you have any concerns about your under 18 year old, don't hesitate to contact the school. You can speak to any member of staff, but the Welfare Officer is Edith Winiker, and the Deputy Welfare Officer is Jo Koussaniotakis.

School: 020 8947 1921 School Emergency: 07939 288723 (24-hour service)

Recognising Different Forms of Abuse

While abuse of young people at Wimbledon School of English may seem to be extremely unlikely we should not assume that it could never happen. Our duty of care to young people and vulnerable adults extends to watching out for signs of potential abuse.

Here are some signs to look out for that may indicate a child or vulnerable adult is suffering from abuse. Some signs may vary with the age of the child or vulnerable adult. Not every child or vulnerable adult will exhibit every symptom. As well as signs, children and vulnerable adults may tell you of abuse. Always listen and follow the procedures for responding to allegations of abuse (below).

Types of abuse

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. Many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health. Victims of sexual abuse can be male or female.

Signs to look out for:

- Acting in an inappropriate sexual way with objects or peers
- Nightmares, sleeping problems
- Becoming withdrawn or clingy
- Personality changes, seeming insecure
- Unaccountable fear/dread of particular places or people
- Changes in eating habits
- Physical signs such as unexplained soreness around genitals, sexually transmitted diseases
- Becoming secretive



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Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Signs to look out for:

- Delayed physical or emotional development
- Shows extremes of passivity or aggression
- Sudden speech disorders
- Overreaction to mistakes, or continual self-depreciation
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child. Physical abuse can occur inside and outside of a child's family environment.

Signs to look out for:

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones, unexplained bruises, cuts, burns, scalds or bite marks
- Children wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather.

Neglect

Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

Signs to look out for:

- Often hungry; may beg or steal food
- Badly dressed in clothes that need washing
- Poor appearance and personal hygiene; unwashed, hair not brushed
- Lacks needed medical or dental care
- Often tired
- Might abuse alcohol or other drugs

Specific Areas

In addition to the types of abuse mentioned above, four other specific types of abuse that staff must be aware of are Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Peer-on-Peer Abuse (which includes bullying, cyberbullying, sexual violence and sexual harassment), and Honour-based Violence (HBV).

Child Sexual Exploitation

This is a form of sexual abuse where under-18s are exploited to engage in sexual activity in return for money, gifts, drugs, affection or status. CSE does not always involve physical contact as it can happen online or involve pressure from peers or cyber bullying.

Signs to look for in under-18s include:

- Having a much older boyfriend / girlfriend
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with others involved in exploitation
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Being absent from school, going missing or regularly coming back late to homestays.



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Female Genital Mutilation

This is a practice that can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and mental health. It is carried out for religious, social or cultural reasons, however there are no medical reasons for carrying it out. It is a criminal offence if done in the UK. Staff should be aware that a person who has suffered FGM may ask for help without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear. Any causes for concern are to be reported to the DSL. Any suspected case of FGM must be reported to the police.

Peer-on-Peer Abuse

It should be remembered that abuse does not only come from adults, but can come from other children. Peer-on-peer abuse can include bullying (including cyberbullying), sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Cyber-bullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices such as mobile phones, computers, and tablets. It can occur through text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behaviour.

The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

Social Media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter

SMS (Short Message Service) also known as Text Message sent through devices

Instant Message (via devices, email provider services, apps, and social media messaging features)

Email

Signs to look out for in under-18s include:

- Appearing nervous when receiving a text, instant message or email;
- Unwillingness to share information about online activity;
- Unexplained anger or depression, especially after going online;
- Abruptly shutting off or walking away from computer or mobile device mid-use.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence is defined as any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act by violence or coercion, acts to traffic a person or acts directed against a person's sexuality, regardless of the relationship to the victim.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. It can include, but is not limited to:

- sexual comments, such as: telling stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Some people might try to excuse mild transgressions as a "joke" or "teenage fun". However, all forms of sexual violence are unacceptable. It should also be noted that both perpetrators and victims can be either male or female.



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This is the information we give our under 18s on day one:

Advice and Emergency Details for Students under 18

Student cards

You will be given your student card on your first morning and you should always carry this with you. This card has the 24 hour school emergency telephone number and the school telephone number.

Travelling to and from the school

We email a map of the local area to you with your enrolment documents, with your homestay marked on the map. Please bring this with you. If you need another map, please ask in Reception. Wimbledon is usually a safe place, but **at night**, please be careful. For example, do not go to places where there are no other people, and if you are returning home from a school social activity in the evening, it is best to take a taxi home or go with friends. Our school staff can telephone for a taxi for you. **Do not** walk home alone at night.

In the evenings

Please remember:

- You must be back at your homestay for dinner every evening. If you are going to be late for dinner, tell your host family
- If you go out in the evening or at weekends, tell your host family where you are going, and with whom. Give your host family your mobile telephone number and keep your phone turned on at all times. Leave a telephone number or address where you can be contacted at all times
- If you are 16 or 17 years, you must be back at your host family by 22.00 on Sunday - Thursday, and 23.00 on Friday and Saturday.
- Do not go to local parks in the evenings.
- Be very careful with your personal possessions and do not carry too much money with you.

When your classes have finished

When your classes have finished, you are very welcome to stay at the school and use the school's self-access facilities, or just relax in the garden and common room.

Excursions

Within the UK

If you are not with your parents or a responsible adult (over 25) appointed by your parents, you can only join excursions to places outside London which are organised by the school. If you are accompanied by a responsible adult (aged over 25) and we have agreement in writing from your parents that you can participate if accompanied by this adult, you can join excursions organised by one of our partner tour companies. You cannot travel independently outside London (ie not as part of a group organised by a recognised tour company) unless you are with a parent or adult relative, designated guardian, or group leader if you have come here as part of a group.

Outside the UK

As above, but you must also have completed and signed immigration letters from your parents, otherwise you will not be allowed back into the country at immigration.

Please see Hibba or Blanca in Reception for more information.

Problems

- If you have a problem big or small, at school, or with your accommodation or any other kind of problem, **please tell someone at the school**. Our Welfare Officer is in Reception and she is always very happy to talk to you. You can also talk to your teacher, or the Academic Director, the Principal and the Accommodation Staff, or someone in Reception. You can also ask your family to speak to us. **The important thing is to talk to us.**
- If you are not at the school and you have a serious problem or emergency, please call one of the numbers on your student card. The school telephone number is 020 8947 1921 and the emergency number is 07939 288723 - it is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



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- If you need to contact the police, or get an ambulance, or call the fire service, call the UK emergency number: 999
- If you have a problem and you do not want to tell anyone you know, you can call ChildLine on 08001111. ChildLine is a counselling service for children and young people.

Drink/cigarettes/drugs

- You cannot enter a pub or club, and you cannot buy or drink alcohol if you are under 18 years
- You cannot buy tobacco/cigarettes if you are under 18 years.
- All soft/hard drugs are illegal in the UK. If someone offers you drugs always say no!
- It is a criminal offence to use false or borrowed ID

Useful telephone numbers

Remember: You should give the school and your host family your mobile telephone number, and you should ask your host family for their mobile number.

School: 020 8947 1921 School Emergency: 07939 288723 (24-hour service) Police/Ambulance/Fire: 999

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Accredited by the



Wimbledon School of English,
41 Worple Road,
Wimbledon
London SW19 4JZ

T +44 20 8947 1921
F +44 20 8944 0275
E info@wimbledon-school.ac.uk
www.wimbledon-school.ac.uk