

Parent Handbook

Welcome and introduction from the guardianship organisation

Dear parents,

Thank you for choosing Thames Hightech Ltd as the guardianship company for your child, we give you a warm welcome here. We will try our best to protect the safety and happiness of your child.

Thames Hightech Ltd was founded in Nov, 2018 in London. We aim to provide our services with the fastest speed and the newest technology support, that is why we chose 'Hightech' as our company name. Our main service is the education service. We provide consulting services to students in China who wish to study in the UK and when they arrive there, we will provide further services, including airport picking up, arranging guardianship and homestay, academic tutoring, translation from English to Chinese or otherwise, etc.

Our director Yuhong Li was graduated in UK for Master degree and have been working in education industry for three years afterwards. He will take charge in arranging guardianship and homestay, as well as the management of licensed drivers and tutors. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact him.

Look forward to working with you,

All staff in Thames Hightech Limited

The role of the guardianship organisation, your guardian, and the role of the homestay

The guardianship organisation

- Contact local authorities if any concern has been raised and report if necessary
- School placement consultation, exam and paperwork preparation
- Check if the parents require a homestay or not before the start of the term. Usually, the homestay will be arranged at the beginning of the school. For example, it will be in January if your child is starting in winter, or in September if your child is starting in autumn.
- Check all the required documents and information of homestay family before your child is placed.

- Establish profile of your guardian, homestay family and show general profile, but do not share key information (name, date of birth, address, ID and other information) to students and parents
- Arrange meeting between students, parents, students' guardian and homestay
- Share students information to students' guardian for them to share with school when requested in writing by school
- Keep record of information for staff and homestay family during the term of contract and delete their information when contract terminates
- Pre-arrival: visa application support, pre-arrival information,
- Help student to enrol at boarding school, chase student important documents (passport, BRP, police registration) to be kept by house parents at schools and keep a copy of the above documents
- Help student to take COVID test for different purposes eg. Fit-to-fly certificate
- Help to arrange medical/dental service if needed
- Help students in vaccination especially COVID vaccination in the UK if required by parents in writing
- Give student UK sim card they will use whilst in the UK and help to have credit top up if needed
- Provide 24/7 emergency contact for schools, parents, students, students' guardians, homestay families
- Be aware of something usual such radicalism, online safety and all safeguarding issues and raise concerns, and report when necessary
- Invoice parents when fee occurred for homestay, transportation, and so on.
- Be responsible for informing parents about the accommodation type. There are three types of homestays that we offer: single bedroom, double bedroom, ensuite double bedroom.
- Record any self-report from homestay staff and investigate further into all parties involved. Let the student and parents decide whether to stay at the same homestay and arrange another homestay if needed. If the situation is serious, e.g. an offence, report to a senior staff member, normally it will be a DSL.

Your guardian

- Provide homestay accommodation during exeat and half term holidays and in emergency situations
- Arrange transportation and accommodation when students do not stay at school because of half terms, holidays, weekend, exeat weekends,

illness, removal from school, study leave, or early leave from school temporarily to prepare international fly in summer holidays etc.

- Communicate with schools, parents about such arrangements
- Share important information of students to school ONLY when there is evidence that school request this information such as forms or in email communications
- Arrange airport school/homestay family transfers, meet students at airport or arrange for school to collect student at airport
- Attend parents evenings online for free. All on campus services such as visiting students, attending school activities, performance, concert and so on when needed, charge at hourly rate.
- Accompany in important occasions including: BRP collection from post office, police registration, visa and passport renewal, visa applications
- Help to open bank account and keep money and expense if required by parents
- attend parents' meetings/evenings
- Provide 24/7 emergency contact for schools, parents, students, and homestay families
- **Management of money:** Help to manage student pocket money **upon writing request by parents.** Annual expense details will be shared with student and parents including payment for accommodation, transportation and incidental expense. Each expense will request parents consent verbally or in writing.
- Parents can also pay directly to homestay and third party for other expense if they prefer so. In this case, Elitgegate International will communicate with homestay and forward invoice to parents for them to pay directly. Students will pay other incidental expense themselves.
- Emergency visit homestay families, students when needed
- Communicate with student frequently via WeChat messages, video phone calls, school visits when needed and identify potential risks and problems and will inform parents immediately and provide possible solutions
- Keep important documents: passports, visa, BRP, police registration and others if requested in writing by parents. Inform parents and help student when need to renew.
- Give consent on behalf of parents ONLY in cases of emergency and ONLY when parents can not be reached

The homestay

- To create a comfortable family environment for students
- To have well kept, clean bedrooms and living room/study area/lounge with sufficient natural light
- To provide videos/pictures of the bedroom that student will be placed.
- Suitable safeguards must be in place to ensure that students have sufficient privacy from other students.
- Normally Students' guardian or parents will not consent to share bedroom with other students, but if have to, homestay family will inform parents, students' guardian about the other student.
- Whether a double or single bed is provided, homestay will not ask two students to share one bed.
- The homestay should have suitable heating and lighting and access to sufficient supplies of hot water as required.
- Homestay will provide study areas for students.
- Will provide appropriate hanging and drawer space for clothing.
- Toilet/bathroom should have a lock on the door.
- Particularly provide information of religious belief, smoking, drinking or having pets around to parents and students' guardian
- Agree Thames to create a profile including general information to share to parents and students
- Students should have the right to opt for a non-smoking and/or non-pet homestay
- Homestay will not host other students above 20 when host students under 16
- Homestay will not accommodate other adult guest when host student from Thames Hightech Ltd
- Provide three proper meals daily and enough drinks and snack and also looks after students special dietary need.
- Help and supervise student to do laundries.
- Provide information, insurance, documents for Thames to check according to policies
- If homestay have to discipline or give sanction to student, they must discuss with students' guardian, and parents first. They can not do it without writing consent from parents and students' guardian. No physical punishment is allowed under any circumstance.

- Communicate their concerns of students behaviours and emotion with students guardian and parents
- Attend annual safeguarding training.
- A homestay can accept **no more than three overseas students** at the same time.
- If there are any situations which could appear compromising or be misconstrued, or where a homestay's behaviour has fallen below the standards required in the code of conduct, the homestay is encouraged to self-report and get help from the guardianship organisation.

The school

- The school that your child attend must ensure arrangements are in place so that staff and students can access to school service, advice, assessment and intervention when needed
- responsible and accountable for the progress and development of pupils in their class, including where support staff are involved.
- supported to gain skills and knowledge in areas that will improve their teaching and support of child
- responsible for differentiating the curriculum and accommodations
- create a home environment at boarding houses to allow boarder to social, relax
- to supervise boarder to have a partly independent life on their own including study, social, extracurricular activities, provide nursing and pastoral care
- giving medical support when needed
- Boarding house provides all service to meet student social development

Safeguarding

Thames Hightech Ltd is committed to safeguarding and child protection. We have comprehensive policies on safeguarding, prevent / anti-radicalisation, low level concerns, complaints, anti-bullying, missing student, online safety, data protection that provide further information and outline our procedures. These can be found www.thameshightech.co.uk.

We have a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy. You or your child can raise a safeguarding concern with your contact at the guardianship organisation or directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (contact numbers are included in the table below). Alternatively, you may wish to raise a concern directly with the school

your child attends. All schools have their own Designated Safeguarding Lead. Please note that any concern that you or your child raise with us will be taken seriously and will be handled in line with our published procedures.

Statement of services

Thames Hightech Ltd will constantly provide our guardianship services to the students to keep them safe and educated in the UK.

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 9am-5pm)	07538826068
Email	Andrew.li@thameshightech.co
Emergencies 24/7	
Telephone	07538826068
Safeguarding concerns	
Designated safeguarding Lead [Yuhong Li]	07538826068
Contact Details for the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP)	Cat Miller Cat.Miller2@lbhf.gov.uk 07876-446-323
Contact Details for the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)	Megan Brown 07776 673020 megan.brown@lbhf.gov.uk

Transport Arrangements

There will be a communication in the wechat or text group about detailed time and location to pick up student before the transportation from school, homestay or the airport. The staff or authorised driver will meet the student at the pick-up location, the

car should be in a good and clean condition. The director is responsible for organising transport at different times, e.g. start / end of terms, half-terms, exeats. Information such as pick up time, flight number, amount of luggage is needed from parents and they should be sent to the communication group by two days before the transportation.

Change of plan?

There may be occasions when you need to change the arrangements that have been made for an exeat, half-term, holiday, or other periods of homestay. Please ensure that you contact us as soon as possible, and no later than one week before the arranged stay. There might be shortage of staff or driver if changes are made last minute.

Emergencies

Thames Hightech Ltd 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 possible the student will be placed with their usual homestay, but if this is not possible, they will be cared for by another homestay family who works for our organisation.

Homestay accommodation

Our accommodations are local experienced homestay where fine facilities are provided including the meal student prefer.

Updates on student's welfare and academic progress

During the time student in the host family, the host family will promptly report the student's situation (once a week or twice a month) to the parents and guardians in the WeChat group, as well as the details of life such as daily meals. During the student's stay at school, the guardian will report to the parents the school's study and life situation, the student's academic performance, status, progress and regression, etc. according to the school's information.

Expenses

If the homestay family has additional expenses in the service, we will record the expenses (amount, time of expenditure, purpose, receipt) and send them to the parents for unified reimbursement.

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 have changed, and handshakes are not currently being used. A verbal greeting is perfectly acceptable, whilst maintaining social distancing.

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. Due to the coronavirus, spaces between people waiting in the queue are currently larger, so please ensure that your child is aware of the need to maintain a suitable distance. In the UK this is currently 1 metre or more. Shops in the UK are currently limiting the number of people allowed inside at any one time, so your child may need to queue more often than in usual times. 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.

What to expect from the homestay

Thames Hightech Ltd expects all their students to be polite and courteous when staying with a homestay. A homestay is not a hotel, which would be a single room, and a quiet place to study. The expectation is that your child will be included as part of the family. As such, they will be expected to engage with family members, joining

them at mealtimes, and possibly helping with chores such as laying the table. Your child's homestay will explain their own house rules to them when they arrive. Please do ask them if you have any questions.

Student Finances

- Parents will keep part of the funds as the child's reserve fund. When the child goes out to book a car, spend outside, or book some courses, the reserve fund can be directly used to pay. When students are at school, parents and guardians directly hand over a small amount of reserve funds to school teachers, and school teachers help students manage
- We will help you set up a bank account and arrange credit cards for your child if required. Please contact us and we will be able to make the necessary arrangements.

Liability

Please note that the homestay provider and Thames Hightech Ltd will not be liable for any damage arising from conduct and/or behaviour of any student placed with the homestay by the guardianship organisation.

Responsibilities during a pandemic

Pandemics can cause major disruption to travel and schooling. It is important in such events that Thames Hightech Ltd takes advice from the government, Public Health England and the World Health Organisation. AEGIS also provides guidance for members to follow. This is regularly updated as a situation develops. Usually, in a pandemic it is important to restrict movement so as not to spread the disease further. That means boarding school students would usually remain at school. In the event of a pandemic Thames Hightech Ltd may not be able to offer homestay accommodation for your child as this could place students, homestay families and the wider community at risk. Thames Hightech Ltd will work with you to find flights to home countries where required. Thames Hightech Ltd will work with schools to meet students' needs during a pandemic. This could be by helping to support students to learn remotely as directed by the school. Thames Hightech Ltd will work with you and your child's school to find suitable quarantine accommodation for students where required. Thames Hightech Ltd has a policy that outlines the procedures we are following during a pandemic. This can be found here www.thameshightech.co.uk