



**UPDATED JANUARY 2020**

## **HOMESTAY POLICIES & PROCEDURES & RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to provide written processes to ensure that homestay service providers and homestay hosts for Accent Language School ('Accent') comply with legislation applying in Guernsey, the UK and ABLS about the care and protection of children in homestay arrangements.

In particular, the purpose of the Risk Management Strategy for Child Protection is to:

- promote the well-being of homestay students and to protect from harm;
- assist Accent to deliver a quality service to the young people in care; and
- reduce the risk of harm to homestay students through written policies and procedures, including information and training, for homestay providers and hosts involved with Accent.

### **Scope**

This strategy applies to:

- homestay service providers;
- homestay hosts;
- residents of homestay host homes;
- homestay students; and

- visitors to homestay hosts' homes.

The policy covers information about the Accent's commitment to child protection, procedures related to recruiting, selecting, training and managing staff, including hosts and homestay service providers; policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines; risk identification and management; and communication and support.

### **Review & version control**

Accent's Director is considered the owner of this policy. An annual review of this policy is recommended. Accent from time to time, may review and update this policy, subject to new laws and technology, changes to school operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing environment.

### **Reference**

#### **Legal Framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

#### **Definitions**

Guardian – of a child means a person who is recognised in law as having all the duties, powers, responsibilities and authority relating to the child that, by law, parents have relating to children.

Homestay provider – is Accent Language School or person arranging the homestay students' accommodation.

Homestay host – is the volunteer or paid family who cares for the homestay student in the family home.

Homestay student – is the child or young person staying in the home of the homestay host.

### **Risk management strategy**

Accent is committed to the protection of all children in its care. In order to manage the risks surrounding child protection the following strategies and procedures apply for the safety and protection of students in homestay.

### **Principles**

Accent believes all Homestay students have the right to feel safe, be listened to, be involved in decisions that affect them, have cultural values respected, not be unjustly discriminated against on the basis of status, activities, expressed opinions or beliefs of parents or carers, and have the best interests considered.

Students under Accent's care should be provided with the knowledge and information required to feel empowered to take action in the event of abuse or neglect. Accent acknowledges that Homestay students are unique and valued individuals and deserve to be treated with care and respect.

Accent recognises that respect for Homestay students is the foundation upon which all policies and procedures are developed. Accent is committed to promoting wellbeing and protecting the security, safety and wellbeing of Homestay students under Accent's protection.

### **Welfare & Safeguarding Policy**

Accent has a current Welfare & Safeguarding Policy which meets criteria as set down in legislation and regulation. These outline policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines, are available in print copy upon request and are given as a separate document to each family during Accent's first visit (new host families) or subsequent visits (current host families). It is the goal of Accent to create safe environments for homestay students and an environment in which they can successfully pursue personal development.

**Statement of commitment:**

Accent Language School's goal is to provide a safe, happy environment for the student to complement the course of study. We realise that a key factor to any successful visit whether for study, work or vacation is accommodation.

Accent believes that all homestay students have the right to feel safe, be listened to, be involved in decisions that affect them, have cultural values respected, not be unjustly discriminated against on the basis of status, activities, expressed opinions or beliefs of parent/guardians and to have their best interests considered;

This is particularly true for students when it is their first time away from their home country and their parents.

We have developed a Homestay and accommodation programme to ensure the following core elements:

- A safe, clean and comfortable environment is provided for the students
- Students have access to Accent Language School's Director and / or Office Manager and other key staff (Director of Studies) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Students are not exploited
- As much as possible, students' special requirements are taken into consideration, even if they are a little out of the ordinary
- Students will be met at the airport or ferry terminal by a representative of Accent Language School and their host family, and will be accompanied to the airport or ferry terminal by the host families where a representative of Accent Language School will make sure everyone leaves safely. Whenever needed for all students under the age of 16, a chaperone service is offered. The chaperone will have been DBS checked and instructed on how to care for the group of students while travelling.

Any breach or suspected breach will be dealt with by investigation and reporting to relevant authorities, where necessary, refer to Accent's 'Reporting & Recording – Procedures and Guidelines' in the Welfare & Safeguarding Policy.

**CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

Accent Language School is committed to child safety, and requires zero tolerance of child abuse from all management, staff, students, volunteers and families. In the interest of openness and transparency this policy is available to all, and guides the day to day decisions of the organisation in order to protect children from abuse.

Accent Language School has an obligation to report breaches of the policy, and requires all staff and host families to proactively ensure the safety of children at all times.

Child abuse can be defined as physical violence, sexual offences, serious emotional or psychological abuse, or serious neglect.

Accent Language School will commit to the principal of zero tolerance, child safety and well-being by providing the following actions:

- Monitoring our adherence to the child safety policy.
- Support, encourage and enable staff, parents, hosts, volunteers and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters, and
- Support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.

Child safety must be considered in the recruitment, screening, selection and management of staff, host families and volunteers in order to reduce risk of child abuse. Details about how to raise a concern about child safety are available in our Welfare & Safeguarding Policy Document and the Guidelines for Host Families brochure.

### **Selection & training of homestay hosts**

Accent recognises that risk management for children in homestay begins with the recruiting, screening and selection of the right people to provide an accommodation service, and continues by having consistent procedures in place for all stakeholders to follow, with adequate management and supervision to ensure they comply with these procedures.

#### **Selection**

In choosing a homestay host Accent must comply with any relevant legislation and be satisfied of the ability of the homestay host to care for the student in a safe and secure environment, and to provide age appropriate support and supervision for a child or adolescent attending school and adjusting to living in a new environment.

All homestay hosts must agree to a Code of Conduct and Accent's Welfare & Safeguarding Policy. Accent has criteria with regard to how a decision about the suitability of a homestay host is selected. These criteria cover the minimum requirements with regard to:

- DBS check, police check and suitability form requirements;
- facilities and infrastructure (e.g. access to transport);
- hygiene;
- cultural awareness;
- Accent and homestay rules; and

- services provided (e.g meals,).

All homestay families, and prospective families, are supplied with a copy of this document.

## **Induction**

Accent values the work of homestay hosts and recognises the responsibility to offer support and assistance to ensure that homestay arrangements work well for all concerned. The school has a written induction process which applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors (hereafter called 'staff') during the first twelve months of appointment, and includes procedures for making staff members aware of the legislation on Child Protection and the Code of Conduct expected of staff.

The induction process includes, but is not limited to

- professional development about identifying and reporting harm or suspected harm;
- making staff aware of the risk management procedures for the protection of children; and
- working through policies related to child protection such as;
  - o behaviour management;
  - o anti-bullying; and
  - o disabilities' policy.

In addition, homestay induction includes:

- providing information to homestay hosts about the aims of the homestay program;
- responsibilities of hosts and of the homestay students;
- possible problems that may arise and possible solutions;
- legal issues;
- contact points for homestay hosts needing assistance or in an emergency; and
- cultural differences to be aware of.

Adherence to this policy and procedure document will be monitored by Accent. A report to the Director regarding compliance/non-compliance will be provided at every occurrence and at least every 12 months.

Regular contact with the homestay host and homestay student will be established through the Office Manager and the Director. Ongoing counselling and communication with the student will be through the Academic Director and the Office Manager.

Accent will make provision for foreign students to homestay if requested by the student's parent/guardian. The parent/guardian of a foreign student requiring homestay arrangements must complete a Registration Form – Appendix A.

Application for homestay arrangements must be made three weeks in advance of the students' arrival in Guernsey.

### **Accent responsibilities**

Induction to homestay will be arranged individually with host families as the need arises. Accent will provide the homestay host with information relating to the student as soon as it is available. Accent will provide the parent/guardian with the homestay host details prior to the student's arrival. Inspect the homestay host home to ensure all host family responsibilities are being met and carry out periodic inspections to homestay residences. Host families will be contacted regularly for feedback about the student and the homestay arrangement. Notes will be recorded on the student file in the School Management System and in the Host Family Folder– Accent will be in contact with host families during each student stay and provide hosts with a feedback form to be given back for filing and analyzing.

### **Homestay Host Responsibilities**

Host families must understand that when hosting a homestay student, the student becomes a member of the family. Most families find hosting a student very rewarding and gives an insight into different cultures. Host families agree never to host a student 18+ while hosting a minor and need to notify immediately Accent Language School of any new adults staying at their house during the planned hosting such as a lodger, relative, or friends.

All members of the host family over the age of 18 years are required to hold a DBS Police check or at least one adult member is required to hold a DBS check and all others a basic police check with a suitability declaration. Application for a DBS check can be made through Accent Language School.

The homestay host agrees to providing or supplying all the necessary care and welfare as set out in the Homestay Code of Conduct – Appendix A.

Homestay hosts must participate in annual reviews of the homestay arrangement.

Families wishing to become homestay hosts are required to complete the Homestay Host Application Form – Appendix B. They will then be visited by a representative of Accent Language School to verify the information given, present and explain all necessary documents, supervise the accommodation, and discuss and explain the hosting experience, its requirements and expectations on both sides (DBS and regular police check, Suitability Declaration, Fire Risk Assessment, Gas Certificate, etc.)

### **Homestay Fees**

The daily fee for homestay is £25 for students 11-17 years old and £30 for students 18+; student stay is on average 2 weeks but shorter or longer stays are possible. Homestay fees are paid weekly on a Thursday.

### **Homestay Student Responsibilities**

Students must agree to follow rules of homestay as set out below:

Students must:

- understand that homestay is not a hotel service and must contribute to the household duties as other family members do;
- make every effort to interact with the family members and be a positive and active family member within the household;
- try to behave in a manner consistent with immediate environment and community;
- be willing to accept any reasonable household rule that the family sees fit to impose for the students' welfare;
- respect the property and privacy of the host family's personal belongings and affairs and acknowledge that the student is liable for all costs incurred during the homestay period which are not included in the homestay fee and is liable for any loss or damage deliberately caused to host family property;
- understand that the homestay environment may not be limited to the traditional family structure (mother, father, children).

Students and parents/guardians acknowledge and agree, by signing the application for homestay arrangement that the terms and conditions of this arrangement are understood and agree to be bound by the above rules.

Students must also abide by the requirements of the 'Homestay Code of Conduct' – Appendix A where applicable.

### **Further Information**

More information on how Accent protects students from harm refer to Accent Language School's 'Welfare & Safeguarding Policy'. Further details about the homestay arrangements are available by contacting the Office Manager (Holly Bisson – 714909) or the Director (Anna Lisa Detassis – 07911 752398)

To the extent permitted by law, Accent is not liable for any injury, loss or damage that may occur by any means, at any time and place during the homestay



## **APPENDIX A**

### **Homestay Code of Conduct**

The Homestay Host agrees to:

1. host no adult students when hosting a minor student
2. provide a clean tidy home
3. provide a safe, secure, private bedroom with suitable storage space for personal effects and facilities for study, including a desk, chair and adequate lighting
4. offer three healthy sustaining meals each day (packed lunch during school days) as well as snacks at other times as required
5. allow access to bathroom and laundry facilities and all general areas of the home;
6. provide towels, sheets, blankets, eating, cooking and other domestic utensils;
7. provide keys or alarm passwords to allow student free access to the home;
8. give the new student a general orientation to the local area and community facilities available, such as the public transport system;
9. send a family member to accompany the student to school on the first day either by bus or on foot;
10. notify Accent in advance of significant changes to Homestay Family circumstances;
11. include the student in family activities and treat the student as a member of the family;
12. support the student's attendance at school and assist with homework if required;
13. have responsibility for the care and welfare of the student;
14. provide adequate out of school hours supervision;
15. communicate with the student in English and converse with the student regularly;
16. immediately contact the Office Manager or Director if there are any concerns regarding the student's academic progress, health, or welfare;
17. assist the student to access any necessary health related services by making appointments and accompanying the student if necessary;
18. ensure Accent holds up to date contact and emergency contact details for the family and the student;
19. provide access to the use of television, telephone, computer and internet facilities, assist with additional connections if required, and negotiate proper use within the home;
20. enable access to a landline telephone (or suitable alternative) in the home to facilitate communication between students and their parents;
21. allow Accent Language School to the home for periodic inspections;
22. read the Homestay Policy & Procedures & Risk Management document
23. Fill in and obtain all the necessary documentation to become a host family

**Accent Language School agrees to:**

1. provide the Homestay Family with Student information as soon as it is available;
2. provide the Student/Parent/Agent with Homestay Family details prior to arrival;
3. advise students and parent/guardian of the Homestay Fees per week, and charge all students in advance;

4. forward Homestay Fees according to the bank account details provided to homestay families; and
5. visit Homestay residences as required to carry out periodic inspections.
6. support the Homestay Family whenever necessary to ensure the welfare of the students

**Termination:** 1. if the Homestay Family breaches this Code of Conduct, Accent will initiate a step by step process, including investigation, counselling, mediation and notification of parent/guardians.

**APPENDIX B**

# Host Family Registration Form

Please complete and return to us at Accent Language School, 28a Commercial Arcade, St Peter Port, GY1 1JX or email it to us at office@accent.gg

**General Information**

Host Name	
Home Address	
Email Address	
Mobile Number	
Home Number	



**Family Details**

Name	DOB	Gender	Occupation/Workplace/School	Hobbies/Interests

**Home Description**

Please tick:

Ground floor home     Home with stairs     Flat (Ground Floor)     Flat (Upstairs)   
 Garden     Swimming Pool     Home with Electric     Home with Gas

Bedroom/s Available	Number of Rooms	Please note if rooms are en-suite, contain TV's, CD players etc, have internet access and if rooms are suitable for adults. Also upstairs/downstairs
Room(s) with single bed		
Room(s) with two or more single beds		
Room(s) with double beds		

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Bank Mandate Form

Please make payments into the following account:

Account Name:

Account Number:

Sort Code:

Bank Address:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Host Family Requirements & Information**

Please note, hosts are responsible for providing their students with breakfast and dinner each day, as well as sending students off each morning with a packed lunch.

If hosts are not able to drop off students each morning and collect each evening, it is their responsibility to ensure students are aware of the necessary bus route and their "stop".

Hosts must ensure students do not break their curfew time, which will be stated by Accent; depending on the wishes of the student's parents.

It is our responsibility to advise you of any medical conditions or allergies that your students may suffer and assist you in any way we can to care for them.

If you have any concerns or complaints at any time about a student or about hosting in general, please contact us immediately on 714909 or info@accent.gg. The phones are put on divert to a mobile phone each evening and will be carried by either Anna Lisa Detassis or Holly Bisson.

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For new hosts we require 2 character's references (from colleagues or friends)

We require a DBS check for at least the head of each household (ideally every adult, wherever possible). If the head of the household does not have a current & valid DBS check, please get in touch with us so we can help you arrange to obtain one.

We must strongly encourage all hosts to advise their house insurance provider that they are hosting students, to ensure they have valid cover and comply with current legislation covering paying guests.

In homes using Gas energy, a safety certificate should be maintained and kept.

All homes should be fitted with Carbon Monoxide alarms in any room where there is a solid fuel appliance, even if it is not usually in use.

Smoke alarms should be fitted on at least each storey of a property, although it is safer to have an alarm in more than one room on each floor, wherever possible.

Alarms must be maintained and tested regularly for your own safety.

Please advise us of any changes, especially in the case of pets, so we can keep records up-to-date.