

Care of Under 18s Guidelines

Information for Students and Parents/Legal Guardians

The school welcomes students aged 6-17 on a range of courses throughout the year.

- In **summer** (June-August), our **Young Learner Academy** for students **aged 12-17** in Groups, or **aged 14 – 17** for Individuals
- From **September-June**, our **tailor-made closed group courses** for teenagers aged **12-17** (Groups only)
- **Throughout the year** on our **Family English** course for children aged **6 – 15** (provided one of the parents or guardians attends an adult course at the same time)
- **Throughout the year** on our **adult courses** for **16 - 17 year-old** students.

The school has a responsibility to provide an enjoyable, comfortable and safe learning environment for all our staff and students. This is especially important for students under 18 and adults at risk and this page explains how we care for these learners.

The school operates a Young Learner centre for students aged 14 -17 in the summer months of July and August and a year-round adult centre for students aged 18 and over. Students aged 16 and 17 can study at the adult centre if we have permission from their parent/guardian.

Students aged 14-17 on our Young Learner Academy or Closed Group courses must be aware that:

- IH Torquay does not provide 24-hour supervision.
- Students must stay with an International House Torquay homestay provider (unless staying with a family member or authorised adult).
- Students travel unsupervised between homestay and school (including for weekend full-day activities) if they are aged 14 years or above. Homestay hosts will show students the route to and from school before the first lesson if they are over 14 years. Students aged under 14 years are taken to school every day by their hosts or school transport and collected after their afternoon activity.
- Attendance is checked at the beginning of the first lesson or activity; students must then remain on the premises until lunchtime.
- Students under 18 are not allowed to leave the premises during break times (unless parental consent is given for this for those aged 16 or 17 on adult courses, or they are with a Group Leader or supervised by a member of staff).
- Students cannot leave the premises unsupervised at lunchtime (unless parental consent is given for this for those aged 16 or 17 on adult courses, or they are with a Group Leader or supervised by a member of staff).
- Any travel to weekday social activities are fully supervised by either Group Leaders or the school's activity staff.

- Exact levels of supervision depend on the age, gender and needs of the students during activities and trips: the amount of structured time with full supervision is always greater than any unsupervised time. Students must remain in groups of three or more within a restricted area during unsupervised time.
- Students aged 14+ may be unsupervised during free time after lessons or activities before they return to their homestay for dinner.
- Students are encouraged to remain in groups of three or more and to stay in areas in the town centre which are well-lit, largely pedestrianised and close to bus stops for journeys to their homestay.
- Students must wear an International House Torquay wristband.
- Students must return home by 21.30 (14-15 year olds) or 22.00 (16-17 year-olds). **Students under 14 are not allowed out in the evenings.**

Students aged 16 - 17-years on adult courses must be aware that:

- The school does not provide 24-hour supervision.

Students must stay with an International House Torquay homestay provider (unless staying with a family member or authorised adult).

- Students travel unsupervised between homestay and school (including for weekend full-day activities). Homestay hosts will show students the route to and from school before the first lesson.
- Attendance is checked at the beginning of the first lesson and after morning breaks (and at the beginning of the first afternoon lesson and after breaks on full-time courses).
- Students must sign in at Reception in the morning and again before any afternoon classes.
- Students are unsupervised outside lesson times including during the breaks and at lunch time.
- A designated area of the Student Lounge is a reserved for students at lunch and break times.
- Travel to and from the social programme meeting points is unsupervised.
- Students receive the appropriate level of supervision during activities and trips according to the Risk Assessments.
- Students are unsupervised during shopping time if part of an adult trip; they will receive the same level of supervision as under 18s if part of an under 18 trip.
- Students are unsupervised during free time after lessons and before needing to return to their homestay for dinner.
- All students are asked to wear an International House Torquay wristband which makes them easily identifiable to staff.
- Pastoral Care tutorials are held every 4 weeks with the Welfare Officer.
- Student must return home by 22.00.

English for Families

This unique year-round programme allows family members to study and improve their English whilst enjoying a holiday together.

Children aged 6 – 15 attend morning classes only and the parents/guardian join one of the adult courses which coincides with the junior schedule. This ensures children are never left unsupervised and that the family members have the same break and lunch time schedule.

There is a Designated Junior Classroom which is used primarily for the Family Courses. This is equipped to suit the needs of the young learners. All staff are aware of the importance of safeguarding these youngsters and are primed to ensure their safety and wellbeing at all times when in the school.

Emergency Phone A member of International House Torquay Safeguarding Team can be contacted 24 hours per day, seven days per week, in the case of an emergency. This number is given to all students during Induction and appears on the wristbands that we require under 18s to wear at all times. Students are also asked to enter the emergency number onto their phones.

Parental/Guardian Agreements

Before a student under 18 begins studying at the school, both the parent/guardian and the student must sign and return to us a number of documents. These confirm that they understand the school's procedures and the rules for the welfare of under 18s and the level of supervision that we provide. It is important that parents and under 18s understand that if a student under 18 breaks our rules, the school will inform the parents/guardian and in serious cases has the right to ask the student to return home: in such cases, the fees are not refunded.

It is also important that the parents/guardian give the school and the homestay the **student's mobile number** along with **next of kin details** and once the student has arrived in the UK, s/he must keep the phone switched on and charged.

Accommodation

We require students under 18 to stay in homestay accommodation. The school does sometimes accept other arrangements where the student is guaranteed to have adult supervision from an adult, such as staying with a family friend or relative, provided the school finds it suitable and provided we have written confirmation of the arrangements from the parents/guardian at the time of the enrolment. The school will inspect the accommodation and meet the host before the student under 18 arrives in the UK.

Pastoral Care

We take the safety of our students very seriously at the school and all of our staff, homestay providers, activity leaders and contractors have a minimum basic level of safeguarding for under 18s. This means they know how to recognise and respond to any students who may appear unhappy or distressed at any time during their stay with us.

We understand that living away from home can be difficult for some students, especially for young learners. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Laura Chirio, is available throughout the day to speak to students about any problems or concerns they have. All of our teachers and office staff can also offer advice and support to anyone feeling homesick or lonely. Outside office hours, we have a 24-hour emergency telephone number that students can call.

We also appreciate that sending a child abroad to study can be worrying for parents, so we want to make sure that we give parents all the information they need to be confident that they are making the right decision when sending their child to the school. We also require parents/guardians to provide us with as much information on their child as possible, including any medical conditions, so that we can provide the best level of care for them at all times. Our **Parental Consent Form** requires that they ensure that their child is aware of such issues as curfews and unsupervised time, accommodation and school rules that must be agreed to.

We take our responsibilities for young learners very seriously and we have rigorous policies and procedures in place to make sure children have the best possible experience in a safe and secure learning

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environment. If there are any aspects of the programme that are not clear, please feel free to contact us. Please also refer to our full list of policies on this website.

Note for Parents/Legal Guardians

Students attending the Young Learner Academy and Closed Group Courses are supervised by our staff during lessons and organised activity programme. Students must take part in the full activity programme and are not permitted to be absent during activities.

Students on this programme are accommodated with homestay providers in the town and will be expected to walk or make use of local buses to travel between the school and their accommodation. During this time, they will not be supervised by either our staff or the homestay providers.

Reviewed: May 2025