

ERA EDUCATION COMPANY

4 RIDLEY ROAD, OXFORD OX42QJ
www.eraeducation.co.uk

TELEPHONE: +44 7557532717
info@eraeducation.co.uk

Company Registered in England no. 11152007. Registered office as above.

Parent Handbook 2020-2021

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If you cannot find the information you are looking for or if you have any further questions, please ask ERA and we will be happy to help.

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This Handbook is designed to give you an insight on how Era Education company operates, our procedures and standards, and what you can expect if you choose ERA, so that you can make an informed choice of guardian for your child.

1 - Key Information

4 Ridley road, Oxford, OX42QJ, United Kingdom
Telephone: 07557532717
Emergency Telephone: +44 7557532717 /07774760001
Email: info@eraeducation.co.uk

Public Holidays

	2020	2021
New Year's Day	1 st January	1st January
Good Friday	10 th April	2nd April
Easter Monday	13 th April	5th April
Early May Bank Holiday	4 th May	3rd May
Spring Bank Holiday	25 th May	31st May .
Summer Bank Holiday	31 st August	30th August
Christmas Day	25 th December	27th December – Christmas
Boxing Day	28 th December (substitute day)	Day (substitute day)

Christmas Break: 25th December 2019 – 1st January 2020

Emergency Numbers in the UK

999 (or 112)	Emergency: Police, Fire Brigade, Ambulance	Free
101	Police (Non-Emergency)	Free
111	NHS (National Health Service, Non-Emergency)	Free

About ERA

Era Education

Era Education company provides wide range of services for the oversea students and our advices based on many years of experience in UK education. The company is based in Oxford, close to many of the UK's most prestigious educational institutions. Our consultant/guardian has been helping students to succeed in their education path and future career since 2015.

You and your child will have access to the guardian 24/7. Era strive to provide good care and support, in order that every student is in a strong position to obtain the best academic results.

Through regular communication, we keep you informed of any feedback, concerns and successes relating to your child.

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2 - Why does your child need a guardian?

UK schools require all their students whose families live overseas to have an appointed guardian residing in the UK, aged over 25 years. It is also now a UK visa requirement. Whilst at the school, your child's houseparent will take responsibility for academic progress and welfare, but there are times during the term and more importantly outside term time, when the school must be able to hand over these responsibilities to a properly appointed guardian. For example, exeat weekends, half terms, medical emergencies, suspensions, and exclusions.

The guardian's responsibilities include:

- acting on behalf of you as parents in situations where you are unable to do so due to distance or timing;
- looking after your child's welfare in the UK when the school is closed for holidays;
- providing a host family for your child to stay with during half term and fixed exeat weekends when the school is closed;
- assisting your child with things they may need – school uniform, sports equipment, pocket money, phone cards, mobile phone, UK mobile sim card, etc.;
- helping your child arrange travel both in the UK (taxi, train or bus) and back home (flight bookings, transfers);
- helping your child if things go wrong:
 - if they get into trouble at school they may be suspended and asked to leave the school for a period, at short notice
 - if they have problems with immigration or passports (for example, lost or stolen)
 - if they get ill and need to go to hospital, or away from school
- being available for your child anytime, particularly if they are worried about things like:
 - school
 - friends
 - their own family. It is not unusual for students to feel unhappy and maybe homesick when they first start school and do not know anyone. We are available to advise and support students in times of need.
 - the host family they stay with. Life in the UK may be very different to their own country and we can give your child ideas and guidance to help them settle in more quickly and easily

Era acts as your child's guardian, and will take responsibility for decisions made.

Era have a strong background in education, and experience and knowledge of boarding schools and international students. Era will be the main point of contact for guardianship issues for your child during school terms. If requested, your child's guardian will visit your child at school.

Era will ensure all arrangements are carefully put in place, and that confirmation is sent to you, your child and your child's boarding house at school. You and your child may have regular contact with Era by telephone and email.

Era Education will termly give an update on your child's welfare, academic and pastoral progress.

Please remember to provide us with your and your child's current mobile number and email address in order for us to be able to contact you as quickly as possible if need be.

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Era Education understand that during the pandemic time the physical communication with the guardian should be limited however a guardian will be available as usual via phone or emails.

If student displays symptoms of Covid19 while he/she stays with the host family

Host parents are obligated to report to the guardian if student shows symptoms of Covid19 which are:

- High temperature
- Continues cough
- A loss or change of sense, smell, or taste

A guardian will contact student's GP, the school and all places where students have been for the last 48 hours. Also the guardian will book a Covid 19 test for the student on NHS.uk website. If the test result will come back positive, all host family members with the ill student must self isolate themselves for 14 days and if they won't develop symptoms come back to their normal life after two weeks. A host family, guardian and all third parties involved with student care must follow Government/PHE guidance throughout the pandemic.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

3 - How is ERA organised and who acts as your child's guardian?

Director

Vitalija Abare is Era's director and has 5 years experience in guardianship and education consultancy. Vitalija has extremely broad knowledge of the education system in the UK, boarding schools, university applications, immigration advice and safeguarding of students.

Accreditation

Era is undergoing the accreditation from Aegis, the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students. As soon as the process will be completed, we will list the information on our website.

4 - ERA's host families and cancellation charges

The students of Era Education company are staying with their guardian if they are on Half term or have any problems and no longer **able to live at school due to illness, suspension or school closure. A guardian is obligated to make sure that the child has suitable host family in case of school closure or organise prompt airport transfer and flight ticket (if his family decided to take him home/abroad).**

Students are expected to respect their host family's way of life in return for being accepted as a family member. Hosts are encouraged to include students in family life and to arrange activities. While staying with a host family, you will gain insight into the British way of life in a happy and supportive environment. Please note, actual guardianship remains with Era during your stay with a host family, so you and your child should speak to us about any concerns you may have or if you need to make any changes to the original arrangement.

Our host families will all have a kind disposition towards your child and are given guidelines and, where necessary, training from Era on the best practice when hosting an international student. This includes advice on Health and Safety matters but if you have any concerns whilst your child is staying with the host family, please let us know immediately.

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House Rules

Every host family has their own house rules which will be given to your child upon arrival. Your child will need to respect and follow them accordingly. In addition, students must also follow Era's homestay rules which can be found in the Student Handbook and which will also be sent to your child before their stay.

Curfews

Your child is given strict guidelines to follow if they go out while staying with their host family. They are told to inform the family of where they are going and when they will return. They are also told to always have the host family's and EEC's phone numbers with them at all times in case there is a problem or they are delayed in returning home.

15 and under	Must be accompanied by an adult member of the host family
16 & 17	Must return by 10pm at the latest
18 and over	Must return by 11pm at the latest

If your child would like to stay out all night (for example, at a friend's house), we must receive written permission from you in advance (see Other Accommodation).

Travel

For transfers between the airport and school, or between the host family and school, EEC have a team of designated and reliable drivers available to meet students and take them to the arranged address in the UK.

Travel by rail and coach can be arranged for economical long distance transfer. EEC will check timetables, book tickets and arrange for an escort (**Under-16 children are not allowed to travel unaccompanied**) if required.

Booking a Host Family

To book a host family, please provide us with all holiday arrangements and homestay requirements, as detailed as possible. At the moment our guardian is the only host family we have, however we are in process of recruiting another two host families in Oxford, who will be able to host after all paperwork will be completed and training evidence submitted.

Type of accommodation

Room:

The child will be provided with a single, double or twin room (one or two beds)

Clean bedding and a towel are provided.

The room will have some storage facility (depending on the length of your stay) and a desk and adequate lighting for working. Sometimes host families provide a table in another room (like the Dining Room) for working instead of the bedroom.

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Shower and Bathroom:

Your child will probably need to share the bathroom with your host family but sometimes they will be able to provide ensuite.

Meal time and laundry

A host family provides full board. For instance:

On breakfast for students are available cereals, milk, bread, jam, Nutella, fruits, yoghurts, ham and cheese (sometimes they can have cooked breakfast with eggs and bacon)

Lunch must include meat or fish, vegetables, salad, and carbohydrates.

For dinner a student can receive a pizza or something similar to the lunch.

Host families offer laundry services minimum once a week, however a student can ask to wash his cloths more often (subject to agreement with the host family)

Wi-Fi access

The student will have an access to WI-FI.

Unrestricted Access - There is increasing concern about the dangers to young people of free and unrestricted access to the Internet without appropriate controls. Era have guidelines for host families, and will advise hosts to limit access in the best interests of the student. For example, wireless Internet will sometimes be switched off overnight, and schools will also have restricted networks.

Changes to Bookings

The cost of the host family varies from £250 per week or £50 per day. If the room is with double bed the cost can increase up to £350 per week. The cost includes full board, a room with an adequate size bed, table, light, and wardrobe. Also, an access to the Internet will be provided.

If extra changes will occur a guardian after permission from the family will cover the cost from the deposit or will invoice parents immediately.

Should you wish to change your child's accommodation or transfer booking, an additional administration fee may be charged. Any fees incurred due to the change will be chargeable.

If less than two weeks' notice is given for any changes to accommodation bookings, two weeks or the total stay of accommodation fees is chargeable (whichever is shorter).

If less than 3 days' notice is given for any changes to transfer bookings, the full transfer fee is chargeable.

The parents are responsible for any damages to the host family's property. Era Education company will not accept any liability for the damage caused by the student whilst placed with a homestay.

Cancellations

Should you wish to cancel your child's accommodation booking, two weeks' notice prior to arrival in writing is required for a refund to be considered.

Please note that if a host family or transfer is booked and then subsequently changed or cancelled, the fees will be charged to your child's emergency fund account.

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Homestay Arrangements in an Emergency

In emergency situations, for example if your child has a medical issue or is suspended and cannot stay in school, Era will arrange emergency homestay accommodation for them. Most of the time the student will stay with their guardian. If a parent cannot be contacted, Era will arrange services for the Student, e.g. accommodation or taxi transfers. In these cases Era will charge from the Emergency Fund Account.

Missing Student Policy (see the full policy on Era Education website)

As your child's dedicated guardian, we need to know their whereabouts at all times. If they go missing from school or homestay accommodation and we cannot reach them, we will report them to the police as a missing person. Therefore, you must always inform us if there are any changes to your child's accommodation/travel plans.

Host families are expected to report unexplained student absences or other situations affecting student safety to Era immediately. If a student is reported to us as missing, we will take all necessary actions to locate the student.

Other accommodation arrangements

We have an obligation to parents, schools and even the UK Immigration to care for and protect our students and to provide safe host family accommodation. If you would like to make alternative care arrangements during half term / exeat weekends for your child, please follow the rules below.

Students aged 15 and under:

Accommodation: Must stay in homestay accommodation arranged by Era unless otherwise agreed.

Transfers: Students are not allowed to book their own transfers or travel unaccompanied unless otherwise agreed.

Students aged 16 & 17:

Accommodation: Parent's permission in writing in advance is required, during office hours. PLUS details of the accommodation and travel plans, as well as the main contact person, who should reside in the UK and be over 25 years old, and agree to full responsibility for the student during the stay.

Transfers: Students can make their own travel arrangements and travel alone as long as Era is informed and given the details. We would recommend that students travel with a friend.

Students aged 18 and over:

Accommodation: Parent's permission in writing in advance is required, during office hours.

Transfers: Students can make their own travel arrangements and travel alone as long as EEC is informed and given the details.

5 - School information including changing schools

School Deposit and Fees

A deposit to the school is paid to reserve a place at the school. Should the student not enrol for any reason other than visa refusal, the deposit will not be returned. The deposit will be kept by the school until the student graduates or leaves the school, given sufficient notices are given. The deposit will then be returned to the student either in full, or minus any extra used by the student in the last term at school. The deposit is not to be used in lieu of the first term's fee.

School fees are paid either termly or annually, but must always be paid prior to the start of term, otherwise penalty fees will incur.

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In addition to school fees, students will incur "extras" each term on outflows such as transport, school trips, stationery, ad hoc school events, etc.

Changing School

Sometimes it can take 2 or 3 weeks, or even a term, to feel comfortable in a new school, with other students and teachers, and with living in the UK. We encourage students to try to relax in their first term so they can enjoy their time as much as possible.

If there are any problems, please try to speak to the school first. We will try to assist if the matter does not get resolved. We can assign you with an education consultant if the School Placement service is required. Should the student wish to leave school prior to graduation, at least a full term's notice must be given by parents officially. If not, a penalty will incur and it often means the deposit paid at the beginning will be confiscated. For example, if a student wishes to leave at the end of the summer term and not return for the following September, a full term's notice means that the school needs to be informed before the start of the Easter holiday.

Parental Authority

Schools frequently need a parent or guardian to sign for parental permission for students to participate in school activities and excursions. Our policy is to forward these to you as parents for approval and if you are happy we will sign, unless you have indicated otherwise on the application form.

6 - Additional information

Feedback

Your views and comments are very important to us. We welcome your feedback and opinions so that we can improve our services.

Shortly after the start of the term we will ask you for the feedbacks regarding our services and will be happy if you could complete the questionnaire every term.

If you would like to leave feedback at any other time, please send it to us via email at info@eraeducation.co.uk or contact on 07557532717.

Aegis organisation may contact you in order to ask for your feedbacks by sending you a questionnaire. Please give honest answers so we can improve our services.

Living in the UK

For tips and advice about living in the UK, please see the detailed section in our Student Handbook. Here you will find information regarding culture, religion, health, safety and laws in the UK, plus useful website links.

Student Finances

Schools usually take care of pocket money for students. The housemaster will keep student's pocket money safe and release funds to them when needed. You child should not keep large amounts of cash in their room in case of theft.

Your child should not need to open a UK bank account, however if they would like to open one, the school may be able to help. To open an account they will need a 'bank letter' from the school, their passport/ID

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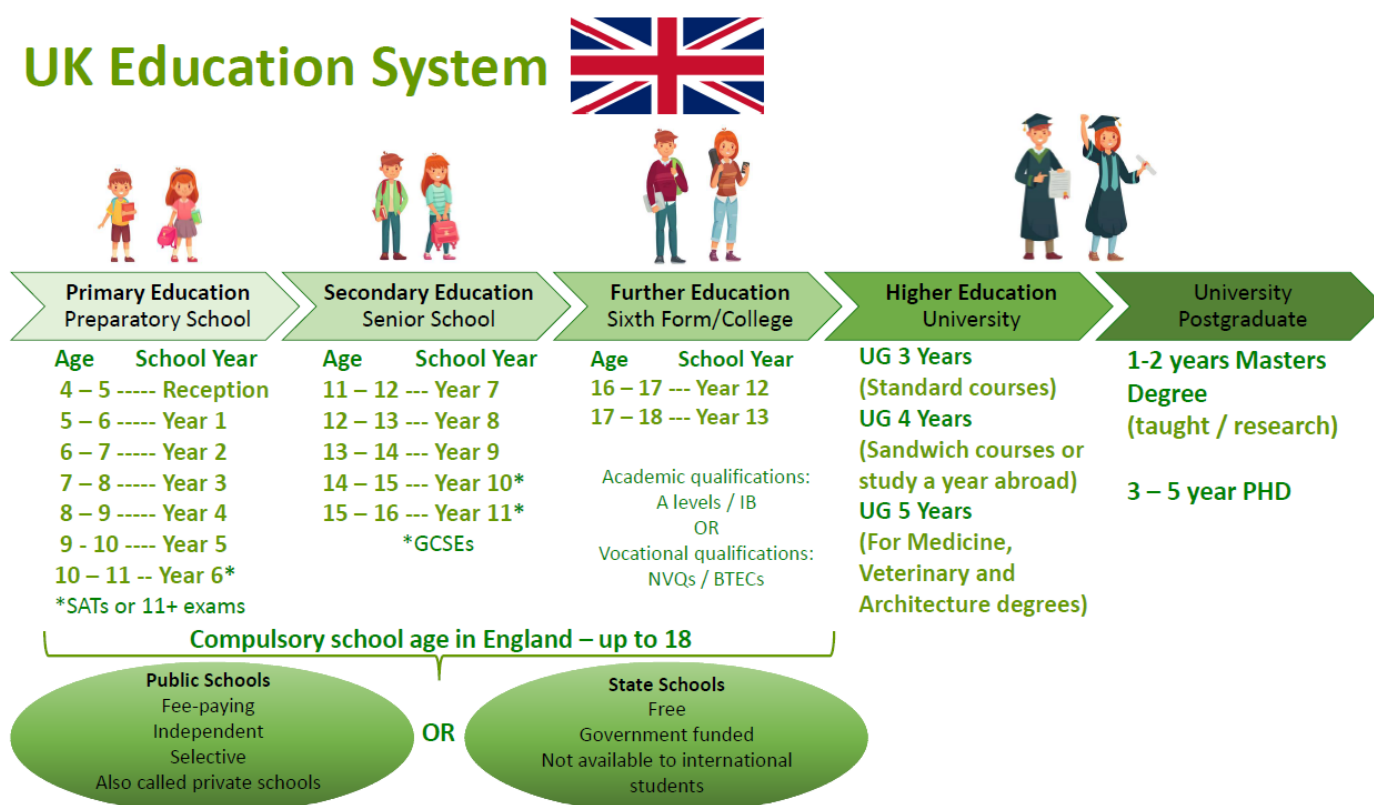
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and proof of address. If a bank card is lost or stolen, it must be reported to the bank immediately so they can cancel the card and send a new one.

We also can provide the student with the pocket money if you will have an emergency account with us.

UK Education System



7 - Termination of working with the student

If your child does not follow Era's Rules or Policies, we may terminate the contract and cease the service without giving you a refund. We may ask your child to leave for the following reasons:

- **Abusive behaviour**
- **Not following all rules relevant to their stay in the UK**
- **Damage to school or homestay property / Unsocial behaviour / Criminal activity. We could also ask you to pay for any damages to school property and/or accommodation.**

If your child breaks the rules or does not follow the Policies, we will:

- Give them an official verbal and written warning and notify you as parents. This aims to stop them from repeating any offence.

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- Permanently exclude them from the services and notify the school if they repeat the offence or break any other rules.

No refund or alternative arrangements will be available.

Alternatively, in severe cases, we may terminate the contract immediately.

In case if the parents would like to cancel the contract with Era Education, they can give one term notice.

However if the guardian acted unprofessionally or wasn't available for the child or parents in the emergency situation the parents have right to terminate the contract immediately.

8 - Equal Opportunities

Era and all of its staff, strive to achieve equal opportunities across its service scale. We believe that everyone should be treated equally and given the same chances.

We have a zero tolerance for abusive behaviour and will take action against and also support any member of the organisation who is a victim of such events.

Students under Era's care can expect:

- honesty and accuracy in all information and publicity about our services
- a warm friendly service from all our members of staff, including support and advice when required
- to have regular opportunities to discuss their progress through regular tutorials with our education consultants and opportunities to seek advice about their future plans
- to stay in clean and comfortable homestay accommodation
- to be taught by appropriately qualified and professional tutors who plan and prepare suitable lessons (if required)
- an interesting and varied Social Programme including many free activities

ERA expects its students:

- to read through the Student Handbook to learn about our services and advice on studying in the UK
- to abide by all school rules and homestay rules to ensure the school and homestay accommodation remain safe and happy places and all students gain the best possible experience from their stay
- to inform EEC of any change of address or contact details
- to follow the E-Safety policy (found in the Student Handbook) and to not use any computers inappropriately or to download inappropriate material
- to respect other people's cultures, traditions and beliefs and to avoid behaviour or language that may cause offence
- to be polite and respectful when speaking to all students, staff members and visitors

9 - Complaints

Informal Complaints

Many complaints can be resolved quickly and informally. You can speak to any member of staff about your complaint, no matter how small.

If you make an informal complaint:

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1. It will be acknowledged immediately (if made in person or over the phone), or within 1 working day if made via email (please remember that the office is open Monday to Friday, 09:30 – 17:30).
2. We may ask you further questions, to repeat and clarify information and/or to provide evidence (photos, for example) to support your complaint.
3. We will tell you when and how you will get an outcome (result)– this will be within 2 working days.
4. We may give you an 'action plan' to tell you what will happen next.
5. You will be asked to confirm if you are happy with the solution.
6. We will keep a confidential record of your complaint.

Formal Complaint

If you are still unhappy, you can make a formal complaint.

To make a formal complaint:

1. Please send an email to us stating your complain details.
2. We will send you written confirmation that your complaint has been received within 3 working days.
3. We may invite you for a physical or online meeting so we can discuss the issue.
4. We will respond to you via email or in writing within 10 working days.
5. We will keep a confidential record of your complaint.

Formal Complaint - Second Stage

If you are still unhappy or feel you have been treated unfairly, you can ask for help from AEGIS.

You can write to them here:

The Wheelhouse, Bond's Mill Estate, Bristol Road, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 3RF Website:
www.aegisuk.net

You should write details about how you have already tried to resolve your complaint with Era and include any supporting documents, including the written outcome of your complaint.

10 - Safeguarding Policy

ERA has a legal duty of care toward young people who use our services. We have a policy and procedure in place to help protect our students from harm and for reference in case something goes wrong. All staff members are responsible for students' safeguarding.

If you would like to speak to someone or report a safeguarding issue, please contact one of the officers in the school and/or Era's Director.

Useful telephone numbers and websites:

NSPCC: **0808 800 5000** - www.nspcc.org.uk

Child-line: **0800 1111** - www.childline.org.uk

EEC's Child Protection Co-ordinators Vitalija Abare: **07557532717**

Oxfordshire Child Protection Concerns MASH (24 hours): **0345 050 7666**

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Alison Beasley - Designated Officer

Tel: **01865 815956**

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: **0800 028 0285** or help@nspcc.org.uk

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Era's Ways of Safeguarding (Full Safeguarding policy can be found on Era Education website)

Student Handbook and Child Protection Policy are given upon arrival.

Parents have to send a consent / registration form where rules and contact details are provided.

U16s are kept separate from older students in different homestay accommodation.

Era only places under 18 students with families where all host will be DBS-checked.

Era ensures that under 18s return by curfew times by educating the students, parents and host families. If a student does not return home by the specified time, the host must call the student and if necessary, inform Era via the emergency number.

Following safer recruitment practices and ensuring all roles involving responsibility for, or those with substantial access to under 18s will have suitability checks, for example with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Era ensures that management and all staff are trained to a minimum safeguarding level 1 and that students are aware of safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding Procedure – Child Protection Information

which shows an adult may have:

- behaved in a way that has/may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child in such a way that indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if working closely or regularly with a child

Types of abuse: grooming, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, neglect, controlling, coercive and threatening behaviours.

If you have a concern about any of the above, please contact one of the officers at school or EEC's Office Manager.

It is not for staff to decide if the allegations are true or not. Their role is only to listen, report to the authority as accurately as possible and allow the official procedure to then take over.

ERA's PREVENT Policy (Full Prevent/Anti radicalisation policy can be seen on Era Education website)

EEC is aimed to ensure that vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist related activity.

Everyone plays an important part in it. All students are expected to look after each other and raise concerns with a responsible adult if necessary.

**Prevent and Designated Safeguarding lead, Vitalija Abare – 07557532717 or
info@eraeducation.co.uk**

Anti-Terrorist Hotline: 0800 789 321

Reporting terrorist material online at https://eforms.homeoffice.gov.uk/outreach/terrorism_reporting.ofml

How does EEC PREVENT?

- Raising awareness and educating.
- Promoting equal opportunity and tackling discrimination to learn to understand others, to value diversity and promote shared values.

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- Promoting a safe and supportive international environment via clear expectations of accepted behaviours and those, including radicalisation and extremism, that will not be tolerated.
- Promoting British values, culture and traditions, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and respectful tolerance of different faiths or beliefs.
- Providing information and School Rules on arrival.
- Recognising the signs:
 - students talking about exposure to extremist materials or views outside school
 - changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming isolated
 - fall in standard of work, poor attendance, disengagement

Procedure

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If radicalisation behaviour is suspected or witnessed it must be reported to the school. Parents will be kept informed, where necessary.
- In the occurrence of any radicalisation behaviour, the following disciplinary steps will be taken:
 1. The giving of an official verbal and written warning, in the hope to cease offending.
 2. In the event of a second occurrence (even if the victim or offence differs from the first), permanent exclusion from the services. No refund or alternative arrangements will be made.

If the abuser is a staff member, the action to be taken will follow the 'disciplinary procedures' within the staff handbook.

11 - EEC's additional services

Whether or not our students know what they would like to do in the future, our education consultants will help them to prioritise the areas they want to focus on and monitor their progress. We will also give the students termly tutorials where they can discuss their strengths and areas to develop.

Tutoring

We have a team of qualified and experienced tutors on hand to provide valuable one-to-one support to students upon request. Our tutors all have areas of expertise and can offer tutoring at all levels, from 11+ entrance exams to GCSE, A-level, IB and degree students in a wide range of subjects. Sessions can be arranged face-to-face throughout the UK or via Skype. We aim to keep all of our students motivated as they prepare for each exam. As well as past paper practice, they will have the opportunity to take control of their own learning in order to maximise their potential.

School / University Placement

EEC has successfully helped students gain admission into reputable schools and universities all around the UK, allowing students to flourish and reach their potential. We provide a seamless and comprehensive service, offering a high level of support to students and parents. Every student is assigned a personal consultant who will help your child to select the best schools and universities based on their needs. We also have contacts in schools and universities throughout the UK, enabling us to speed up and track applications.

For more information or to book any of our additional services, please contact us.