

af academic families

Safe
Happy
Successful
Students



High Quality Guardianship Care throughout the UK



Welcome

We're here when you can't be.

We understand how important it is to find the best partner to support your family during your child's time at school and we believe our quality service will ensure your child is safe, happy and successful.

Congratulations on your choice of boarding school - it's never an easy decision to make and now you need to partner with a guardian to provide your local support. Most schools recommend you appoint an AEGIS (Association for the Education & Guardianship of International Students) accredited guardian to ensure quality support.

"Academic Families provide a guardianship service of the highest calibre for students and their families. Their knowledgeable and experienced staff provide exemplary pastoral and academic support to help ensure that students are extremely well looked after, and achieve to the best of their ability."

AEGIS Lead Inspector September 2016

Soon you will understand why we are called Academic Families - we want you and your child to enjoy the support we would want for our own family.

Don't worry if, like most of our parents, you are new to UK boarding school education because you can rely on our experience. Most of our team have lived overseas and boarding schools have played an important part in our personal as well as professional lives – so you can trust that we understand guardianship and know how best to look after your child.

You need to find local support for your child and the Academic Families team of staff and hosts is located close to boarding schools throughout the UK so we will provide your personal and local support.

Your child will enjoy caring hospitality from our excellent hosts, recruited from our personal connections and referrals. They are especially interested in supporting international children and many have lived overseas themselves. Typically they want children to become involved in their family on a score of 8 or 9 out of 10 - they are not the average host you may find with other agencies.

We've thought about holidays too - if your child stays in the UK for half term then they can join one of our holiday trips, stay with their local host or with a host further afield to enjoy and learn about more of the UK.

We don't forget about you, our parents, as we help you understand how best to support your child at their new school. We can even speak to you in your own language and help you learn English - we want you to enjoy your child's school years as much as if they were at home.

Remember we're here when you can't be.

Welcome to Academic Families.



Our Team

The Academic Families team work closely together to ensure your child's safety and enjoyment. The key people you will probably meet include:



Lorna Clayton - Director & Founder

Lorna founded Academic Families in 2012 following her 13 year overseas career in Australia, South America and East Africa. She founded a Kenyan education charity in 1993, funding and placing needy students in education. With 20+ years' business experience, as well as an expat mother, Lorna leads the Academic Families team to deliver our premier personal and professional service. As a British Council trained Agent, Lorna's knowledge and expertise ensures that our students receive the best possible advice and support leading to their educational success.

Lorna and her team are recognised by the British Council, AEGIS, English UK and Youth Mental Health England for their top-quality service.



Roni Jennings - Operations Manager, Child Protection Officer

Roni heads our Placement and Guardianship teams and is our designated Child Protection Officer. Roni's extensive experience of international education includes 20+ years teaching in British curriculum international schools, latterly as Deputy Head in Kenya. Her great insight into the challenges international children face when moving cultures, curriculum and learning styles enables her team to ensure your child understands the best ways to school success and happiness.

As a British Council trained Agent, Roni fully supports our parents make their best educational decisions. Her expertise placing students in closely matched schools ensures their happiness and success and her role as Child Protection Officer, always putting each child's welfare foremost ensures their safety and wellbeing.



Louise Brunton - Business Development Manager

Louise has mainly lived outside the UK in SE Asia, the Middle East and the Caribbean. Working for international travel and relocation companies has developed Louise's cultural intelligence ensuring her excellent international understanding and relationships. Selecting the best boarding schools for her own 3rd culture children has also given Louise a wealth of personal personal experience and empathy for our parents, understanding their dilemma choosing the best education for each child. Louise is responsible for introducing our services to families around the world, ensuring we provide the support they need.



Sophie Clayton - Guardianship Manager

Sophie's early schooling was in Kenya before moving to the UK to complete her education. She swam competitively at national level then taught and coached swimming. Her natural teaching skills and easy rapport with our students ensure their education goes beyond the classroom as they develop their independence safely and happily.

Sophie manages our Guardianship support and is responsible for our students' UK arrangements and safety when they are not at school. She is supported by a team of Area Managers providing local guardianship support throughout the UK. As a British Council certified Agent, Sophie has comprehensive knowledge of the UK education system, visa regulations and best business practice ensuring our families are professionally supported at all times.

Language Supporters

Our Language Supporters understand the challenges moving to a new country, culture and language from their personal experience and translate more than words to support our families.



Lisa Guo - Chinese Language Support

After a business career in China, Lisa came from Beijing to the UK in 2001. Now married with a school age son, Lisa's first-hand knowledge of both education systems enables her to support our Chinese families understand everything you need to know about UK education and culture.

Lisa also ensures our schools understand some of the cultural background our students come from so everyone learns together!



Debbie Spens - Counsellor

Debbie's 30 year career within boarding education has given her great experience of the issues facing our international students as they adapt to and benefit from their boarding education. Debbie's career includes Special Educational Needs teaching with a special interest in pastoral care within the school boarding community, teaching PSHE and training Mindfulness in Schools. Debbie is a Mental Health First Aid Instructor and has trained the Academic Families team to ensure we understand how to best support the wellbeing and mental health of our students.

Debbie's post graduate diploma in Careers Guidance enables her to work as a Careers Advisor and consultant for UK and international boarding schools.

Area Managers

Our team of local Area Managers have many years' experience living overseas and educating their own children in the UK.

Host Families



Your host family will welcome your child into their family and home – they will be their local family while they are at boarding school.

Your host will provide a safe, caring and happy environment for your child to enjoy a relaxing break away from school. It goes without saying that all our hosts have police clearance and are upright members of their community.

Our experienced team find a host family to best suit your child - both in terms of relationship and location. Many of our hosts have lived overseas, some have attended boarding school themselves while their parents were overseas, and the children of many have attended similar schools as either day or boarding pupils.

Many of our hosts are parents and some are grandparents, some live in cities and others in rural areas - but all understand the needs of teenagers and will ensure your child enjoys quality relaxing breaks - not entirely spent in bed or on their laptop! Most of our hosts maintain their strong relationships with their students when they leave school and go on to university - like the best families, we become friends for life.

We are rightly very proud of our success matching hosts to children ensuring everyone has a fun and happy visit.

All Academic Families hosts want to help our students be safe, happy and successful children.

Guardian Services

We're here when you can't be.

Our range of services is aimed at ensuring you and your child have all the support you need whilst studying in the UK. In consultation with you, we will tailor a suitable programme depending on the level of service you choose.

Key services include:

Before you arrive

- Parent & Child Handbooks

When you arrive

- Meet & Greet
- Welcome Pack
- Shopping support

In an Emergency

- 24/7 support
- Emergency hosting
- Travel rearrangements
- Medical support
- Disciplinary support
- Whatever is required!

Hosting

- Matching a host to your child
- Arrange exeat homestays

UK Transfers

- Organise all UK transfers
- Unaccompanied Minor service
- Airport Assistance - chaperone from plane door to connecting plane or taxi - all UK airports including Heathrow

At School

- Termly visits & regular contact
- Pastoral support
- Academic support
- Parents' Meeting attendance & report
- Support at special events

Extra Support

- Communication in your language
- Half term trips
- Mobile - SIM & top ups
- Banks - open account & top ups
- Birthdays - card & present and we can arrange a birthday cake
- Visa renewal - we can support your British Residency Permit application
- Exam revision - we can recommend and book revision courses and tutors
- Parent 1:1 English course - we can arrange close to school so you can learn & see your child at school, continue to learn via Skype lessons

Your child may not require all our services and we will discuss your individual needs and agree a package to suit.





FAQ

What is an Educational Guardian?

An adult or a company in the UK who is appointed by a parent to be their representative while their child studies in the UK.

Do we need to have a guardian?

Most boarding schools and universities require their international students under 18 years of age to have a UK based Educational Guardian during their UK study.

How do we choose a good guardian?

The Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students (AEGIS) lists accredited agents.

What will a good guardian provide for my child?

Accredited guardians will act on your behalf in emergencies and provide routine local support - for example attending school parents' meetings and helping your child adapt to their new life at boarding school. They will arrange transfers to and from UK departure points, organise host families for time away from school and deal with any problems that may arise, keeping in regular contact with everyone. All are available 24/7 in an emergency.

How will I know my child will be safe with Academic Families?

We are AEGIS accredited. Our friendly, professional, child focused team – staff, drivers and host families - are authorised to work with children. Full disclosure checks, references and host family home visits are just the start of our ongoing security checks.

How much does it cost?

We have different levels of competitively priced services available depending on the support you require.

Why should I choose Academic Families?

We do so much more than AEGIS guardianship - treating your child as our own. We continuously improve our services to ensure the best possible service including English & Boarding Preparation courses, Half Term Trips, Revision Courses, Parent English Tuition.

We're here when you can't be and we solve problems so you don't have to.

Join Our Family

Contact Us

www.academicfamilies.com
hello@academicfamilies.com
+44 131 331 3317

AEGIS ACCREDITED

We are fully accredited by AEGIS - the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students.

"Academic Families provide a guardianship service of the highest calibre for students and their families. Their knowledgeable and experienced staff provide exemplary pastoral and academic support to help ensure that students are extremely well looked after, and achieve to the best of their ability."

AEGIS Lead Inspector 2016

