



BUCKSWOOD OVERSEAS SUMMER SCHOOL
Parent / Guardian Guide
Summer 2026

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER

+447749096168

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Introduction

From time to time we receive calls from parents and, nine times out of ten, those calls are regarding the same issue. Here at Buckswood Overseas Summer School we are experts in what we do. With over 13 years of experience in school management and student welfare, we have dealt with just about every issue that can arise. If you receive a call from your son or daughter, please trust us in what we do. Although all issues are very important to us, the likelihood is that we have experienced it and resolved it hundreds of times before.

We are proud to share that our Spring 2026 students achieved a 100% pass rate in their Trinity English language examinations — a reflection of what is possible when students feel safe, supported and genuinely engaged. This is the standard of care and teaching your child will experience.

This guide is here to help you know what to do should you have any concerns or receive a call from your son or daughter while they are with us.

Calling Your Son or Daughter

As difficult as this may sound, we would like to advise that you do not call or message your child while they are with us. The old saying is that 'no news is good news' and calling your child can lead to the following:

- Although they have been perfectly fine all week, they will suddenly feel homesick upon hearing your voice and may begin to feel upset.
- Your child may sound unhappy — not because anything is wrong, but because your call has interrupted time with their new friends. They will want to finish the call quickly and may not sound like themselves.
- You may be calling during a lesson or an activity, which is extremely disruptive. If you must call in an emergency, please call between 08:00–09:00, 13:00–14:00 or 18:30–19:30.
- You may create problems that do not exist. Parents often misinterpret what their children are saying. 'My bedroom is horrible' may simply mean 'I am sharing with someone from a different country.' In the first 24 to 48 hours, students may feel tired, homesick, shy or even a little scared — this is completely normal. By Tuesday afternoon, these feelings almost always disappear.

Common Concerns — What to Do

Your child tells you they are homesick

Homesickness occurs very rarely. In over 13 years at BOSS, we have welcomed thousands of students from more than 50 countries and experienced only a very small number of cases. We prevent homesickness by keeping our students so busy that they do not have the opportunity to think about home.

The best way to treat homesickness is to encourage your child to get back into the group and get involved. If you receive such a call, simply tell them to return to their class or their activity – and do not spend more than 30 seconds on the phone, because the more contact a child has with their parent in this situation, the more homesick they feel.

Your child tells you they do not like the food

At BOSS we can have over 30 different nationalities dining with us at any one time. We offer a wide variety of cuisines and options to suit all palates. There is always something for everyone – all staff eat the same food and year-on-year the feedback is excellent. Please reassure your child that there is food they will enjoy and encourage them to try new things.

Your child tells you their class is too easy or too difficult

This concern, if it arises at all, usually comes in the first day or two – most often because a student wants to be in the same class as a friend. Each student is tested on arrival and placed by our Director of Studies at exactly the right level. If your child raises this concern, simply tell them to speak to the Director of Studies, who can assess them and have a conversation in English at the same time.

Your child tells you they do not like their bedroom

This is usually because they are not sharing with a friend or with someone from their country – and that is entirely by design. One of the most valuable parts of the BOSS experience is sharing a room with a student from a different country, learning about a new culture and making a friend for life. If your child raises this concern, please tell them to speak to a member of staff.

Your child tells you they do not feel well

We have staff responsible for student welfare 24 hours a day and we conduct daily room inspections to check on the wellbeing of every student. We have a nurse on call, a doctor 15 minutes away and a hospital 15 minutes away. Students must not bring their own medicine unless it has been prescribed by a doctor and given to a member of staff with clear instructions. Please do not tell your child to take any medication you have given them without informing us. Simply tell them to speak to a member of staff immediately and we will take every step necessary to provide the highest level of care.

Your child tells you they do not know what they are doing

Students receive a timetable diary on arrival day. They meet with their House Parent each morning at 08:00, attend assembly at 09:00, an afternoon meeting at 15:15, an evening meeting at 20:00 and a House Meeting at 22:00. Information screens and notice boards are positioned around campus, and our staff constantly remind students of what is happening. Tell them to speak to a member of staff.

Your child tells you they cannot understand anything

It is always possible to communicate somehow. Our staff between them speak many languages and other students or Group Leaders can assist in an emergency – though we will only use a student's first language in genuine emergencies. That is why they are here: to practise English, improve their English and grow in confidence. Tell them to speak to a member of staff.

Rules for Students

Students must follow the law of the land, which means:

- No student may buy alcohol or cigarettes/tobacco regardless of their age.
- The use of alcohol and drugs is strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Students found in possession of alcohol or drugs may be reported to the police and their course terminated with no refund.
- Any student considered to be excessively under the influence of alcohol will be asked to leave the school immediately.
- No smoking is permitted anywhere on campus, in the residence, on activities or on excursions.
- Group Leaders may only smoke outside the campus boundary.
- Students must keep their bedrooms tidy and use the bins provided.
- Students must leave communal areas by 22:00 and be in their own rooms by 22:30 when quiet time begins.
- We reserve the right to terminate without notice the course of any student who persistently misconducts themselves or fails to meet attendance requirements. There is no refund in such cases.

School Rules – The Warning System

The following rules exist to help everyone enjoy their stay. We ask that you go through these with your son or daughter before they arrive. We operate a three-warning system and will contact parents if a warning is issued.

First Warning

First offences may include:

- Smoking
- Being outside your room after 22:30
- Misbehaviour in class or on activities or excursions
- Missing class without informing staff

Second Warning

We may contact parents at this stage. Students may be excluded from activities for a day. Second offences may include:

- Leaving the house after 22:00
- Refusal to respond to staff requests
- Bad language towards staff or other students
- Repeating a first offence

Third Warning — Student may be asked to leave

Third offences may include:

- Fighting
- Drinking alcohol
- Shoplifting or stealing
- Bullying
- Setting off fire alarms or damaging fire equipment
- Damage to property, including graffiti
- Any offence likely to harm or endanger other students
- Repeat of a first or second offence

Please note, in some extreme cases, it is not necessary to receive a first, second or third warning before being asked to leave our school. If a student is responsible for a serious incident, they can be asked to leave immediately.

Complaints Procedure

We are committed to providing our students with the very best courses, accommodation and service. If you have a concern at any point, please contact us immediately. We take every comment seriously and act quickly.

Please direct your concern to the appropriate person:

- Academic issues — speak to the Director of Studies or Senior Teacher
- Accommodation or general issues — speak to the Summer School Director or Summer School Coordinator
- Activities or excursions — speak to the Head of Activities and Excursions

The procedure that will be followed:

1. The relevant manager will assess the issue and find a solution
2. All parties involved will be informed of the proposed course of action
3. After 48 hours we will check in with you to confirm the issue is resolved
4. If unresolved, a formal complaints form will be completed and further action taken

What to Bring

The lighter your child travels, the happier they will be! We recommend:

- Normal clothes — whatever they wear day to day
- Sports clothes — for the wide range of sports on offer
- Smart clothes — for discos and evening events
- Swimming costume — we have a pool and may visit the beach (not on Spring course)
- Toiletries and towel
- Pyjamas and relaxing clothes
- A waterproof coat
- For Spring course only — warm coat, hat, scarf, gloves and waterproofs
- Phone charger and UK 3-pin adapter (British sockets are different!)
- Pens, pencils — all course materials are provided
- Any prescribed medication, clearly labelled, to be handed to a member of staff on arrival

Questions Parents Often Ask

Q. How safe is BOSS?

A. Extremely safe. We are set in beautiful East Sussex countryside and plan student supervision very carefully. We have 24-hour CCTV and our safeguarding standards are very high.

Q. What is the weather like during July and August?

A. Summer weather is generally warm and settled, ranging from 17 to 25 degrees Celsius with plenty of sunshine — though British weather can surprise! A light waterproof coat is always worth packing.

Q. What is the food like?

A. All meals are provided in the Dining Room except on full-day excursions, when a packed lunch is supplied. Our in-house chefs work at BOSS year-round and prepare a wide variety of food to suit all nationalities. Any suggestions or dietary requirements can be addressed immediately.

Q. How much pocket money will my child need?

A. As a general guide, £50 per week is ample for souvenirs, snacks and drinks. Money can be given to staff or group leaders for safekeeping.

Q. What should my child do with valuables?

A. Passports, travel documents and other valuables can be given to staff for safekeeping. Each house has a secure safe.

Q. Should I take out travel insurance?

A. Yes, we strongly recommend it. Travel insurance is not included in our package.

Q. How many students attend at any one time?

A. Between 100 and 200 students, with strict staff-to-student ratios in place at all times.

Q. What kind of lessons are on offer?

A. Students attend 20 hours of classes per week over 5 days. This includes 15 hours preparing for the Trinity College London General Examination in Spoken English and 5 hours preparing for the Leadership Skills Foundation Young Leader Award. Students reading and writing skills are tested online before arrival and on arrival they will take a speaking and listening test. They will then be placed at the right level. Maximum class size is 16.

Q. What happens if my child needs to take medicine?

A. By law your child must not take medication without supervision. All medication must be handed to a member of staff on arrival with clear written instructions. If your child feels unwell, they should contact a member of staff immediately.

Q. What laundry facilities are available?

A. We provide a laundry service once a week. Each house also has a washing machine for students who wish to wash their own clothes.

Q. Can I visit my child on campus?

A. Only students and staff may stay on campus. If you wish to drop off or collect your child or arrange a visit, please contact the Summer School Director in advance to arrange a suitable time and place.

Q. What travel documents should my child bring?

A. All students should carry valid travel documents appropriate to their nationality and visa status for the United Kingdom. Please ensure your child has all documents required for their return journey. If you are unsure what is required, please contact us before departure.

Q. What are the arrival and departure arrangements?

A. Students should arrive on a Sunday and depart on Saturdays. Please contact the Summer School Director to arrange a suitable arrival and collection time.

Semi-Supervised Time on Excursions

Students aged 13 to 17 may be given supervised free time during certain excursions — for example, time to explore a museum or a shopping area. This is only permitted when students are wearing their BOSS wristband (which displays the emergency number), we have their phone number, and they are in groups of two or more. A staffed meeting point is maintained at all times and other staff patrol the area.

Students aged 12 and under are supervised 100% of the time. If you do not wish your child to have any unsupervised time, please inform us before arrival.

Health & Wellbeing

Our Commitment to Your Child's Health

- We have staff responsible for student welfare 24 hours a day.
- Daily room inspections check the health and wellbeing of every student.
- A nurse is on call, a doctor is 15 minutes away and a hospital is 15 minutes from campus.
- All medication must be prescribed by a doctor and handed to staff on arrival with clear instructions.
- If your child feels unwell at any time – day or night – they should speak to their House Tutor immediately or call our emergency number.
- BOSS follows all current UK government guidance on health and infectious illness. If a student becomes unwell we will contact you and follow appropriate protocols.

Safeguarding

The safety and wellbeing of every student is our highest priority. BOSS has a comprehensive Safeguarding Policy that meets and exceeds the requirements of UK law and the British Council Accreditation Scheme. We are committed to protecting all students from harm, abuse and neglect.

Our Safeguarding Commitments

- All staff hold current Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks before working with students.
- All staff receive safeguarding training before each course begins.
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Summer School Director, who has overall responsibility for safeguarding across the school.
- Where a concern arises about the welfare of a student, we are legally required to report it to the appropriate statutory authorities, including social services or the police.
- Students are supervised by staff at all times. We maintain strict staff-to-student ratios in all settings, including residential accommodation and excursions.
- BOSS operates within the guidance of the British Council Accreditation Scheme and the UK Government's statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

If you have any concerns about the welfare or safety of your child while they are at BOSS – or about any other student – please contact the Summer School Director immediately on our 24-hour emergency number. All concerns are taken seriously, investigated promptly and handled with full confidentiality.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Summer School Director who is:

Neil McLoughlin who you will become familiar with around school or on +447749096168 if it is after hours.

Our Deputy DSL is:

Sue Blackman who is in the BOSS Office from 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday or also reachable on +447749096168.

A copy of our full Safeguarding Policy is available on request from the Summer School Director.

Anti-Bullying Policy

BOSS operates a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying in all its forms. Every student has the right to feel safe, respected and happy during their stay with us. Bullying – whether physical, verbal, social or online – is never acceptable and is treated as a serious breach of our school rules.

If your child is experiencing bullying, please encourage them to speak directly to their House Tutor or the Summer School Director as soon as possible. All reports are taken seriously, handled confidentially and acted upon quickly. Any student found to be bullying another student will receive a formal warning and may be asked to leave the school.

We also ask parents to speak to their children about appropriate online behaviour before they arrive. Cyberbullying – including unkind messages, social media posts or online harassment of other students – is also treated as a serious offence.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

BOSS is an inclusive school that welcomes students from every country, nationality, background, culture and religion. We are committed to treating every student, parent and member of staff fairly and with equal respect. No one will be treated less favourably because of their age, disability, gender, race, nationality, religion, belief, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic.

We actively celebrate the diversity of our student community. We believe that learning alongside peers from different countries and cultures is one of the greatest benefits of attending BOSS – and a life experience that stays with students long after they return home.

If you believe your child has been treated unfairly or discriminated against in any way, please contact the Summer School Director immediately.

Online Safety

Internet access at BOSS is provided during designated times only (see the Student Guide for details). We have a clear Acceptable Use Policy in place that all students are expected to follow. Students are not permitted to access inappropriate or harmful content online, engage in cyberbullying, or share personal information with strangers.

We ask that parents speak to their children before arrival about responsible online behaviour, including the appropriate use of social media during their stay. In particular, we ask students not to share images or videos of other students without their consent, and not to share their location or personal information publicly.

If a student misuses the internet – including accessing inappropriate content, engaging in cyberbullying, or endangering their own or another student's safety online – this will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

Data Protection and Use of Images

BOSS handles all personal data in accordance with UK data protection law (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The personal information we collect about your child – including contact details, medical information and passport data – is held securely and not shared with third parties except where required by law or strictly necessary for your child's wellbeing.

Photography and Images: During the course, staff may take photographs and videos for use on our website, social media channels and marketing materials. By enrolling your child, you are giving consent for images in which they appear to be used in this way, unless you notify us otherwise in writing on or before arrival.

Students may not take photographs or videos of other students or staff without their explicit consent. For further information about how we handle personal data, or to request a copy of our Privacy Notice, please contact the Summer School Director.

Summary

To summarise, we once received a call from a partner, who had received a call from a parent, who had received a call from her son. Five cross-continental phone calls were made. All he wanted was an extra pillow – and he was standing right next to the Summer School Director.

Please always encourage your child to speak directly to a member of staff and to deal with any issues themselves. It will help them develop their problem-solving skills, become more independent and grow in confidence. It also means that any issue can be resolved much faster and more effectively.

There should never be a situation – unless it is a genuine emergency – in which we receive a call from a parent during the running of a course.

24-HOUR EMERGENCY NUMBER

+447749096168

For genuine emergencies only. Please save this number before your child's arrival.