



BOARDING SCHOOLS IRELAND

Parent Handbook
2023 - 2024

Key Information

Contact Details

There may be times when you need to contact us. We are always here to assist you with any requests or concerns that you may have. You can contact us the following ways:

Key Contact

Sarah Bill

+353 851545076 (Whatsapp, WeChat, Telegram & Signal)

Sarah@boardingschoolsireland.com

(BSI will be closed on these days)

1st - 31st Jul 2023

Christmas 23rd Dec 2023 - 6th Jan 2024

Easter 23rd March - 6th April 2024

1st - 31st July 2024

Christmas 21st Dec 2024 - 4th Jan 2025

Why Does Your Child Need a Guardian?

Schools require all their students whose families live overseas to have an appointed guardian living in Ireland aged over 25 years. It is also now an Irish 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 Ireland when the school is closed for holidays;
- providing accommodation for your child to stay with during half term and 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, mobile sim card, etc.;
- helping your child arrange travel both in Ireland (taxi, train or bus) and back home (Airport transfers);
- helping your child if things go wrong:
 - If they have a problem at school
 - if they get into trouble at school and are suspended/asked to leave for a short period of time
 - 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:
 - work
 - school
 - friends
 - their own family (it is not unusual for students to feel homesick when they first start school)

BSI acts as your child's guardian and will take responsibility for decisions made. If your child has a personal problem or needs some advice or support, they are advised to contact us.

BSI have a strong background in education and experience and knowledge of boarding schools and international students. BSI will be the main point of contact for guardianship issues for your child during school terms.

BSI 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 BSI by telephone and email. The centralised administration means that all data and plans are kept centrally, and therefore any queries and problems can be quickly and efficiently resolved. If it would help you to be able to talk to a member of BSI in your native language, this can often be arranged. Please remember to provide us with your current mobile number and email address in order for us to be able to contact you as quickly as possible if need be.

The services available to your child will depend on the package you have booked with us. Details can be found on our online pricing page which shows the services included with each guardianship package and prices for adding additional services. If you are unsure which package you have booked or which services are included, please contact us.

How is BSI Organised and Who Acts as Your Child's Guardian?

Director Sarah Bill is BSI's director and most experienced education consultant, with many years of experience. Sarah has an extremely broad knowledge of the education system in Ireland, boarding schools and safeguarding of students.

Sarah will be the main point of contact for you and your child. Sarah will be in regular contact with you and your child and will visit your child at school (dependent on the guardianship package booked). We will be available by phone at all times in case of emergency.

Lucan Centre Staff

Our carefully selected staff look after students during exeats and half terms. Your child will have a great time and will meet other international students from other boarding schools in Ireland.

Host Families

Our carefully selected and inspected host families look after students when they are sick, if they are suspended & during half terms and other school breaks. Your child will be welcomed and treated like a member of the family during their stay.

Other Staff

We have a number of other staff that work alongside Sarah to provide support and assistance.

Accreditation

BSA - British Schools' Association

BSI Guardianship has been a BSA Certified Guardian since 2020. Below is the summary statement from our most recent inspection:

“Boarding Schools Ireland Guardianship's (BSI) friendly and dedicated professional team are committed to working closely with students, parents, schools and agents in order to develop and maintain excellent relationships. BSI staff have extensive knowledge about international students studying in Ireland, have a positive and proactive approach to their Guardianship work and are focused on providing the best service to all their partners and students. Their policies and procedures are of a high standard, regularly reviewed and updated.”

Exeat Weekends and Half Terms

BSI host students in the lucan centre and have a number of host families with whom we place our students when schools are closed for weekends and half terms. All our host families meet the requirements set out by AEGIS (The Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students). Host families are inspected at least once a year by BSI to ensure high standards are maintained. BSI also undertake rigorous checks on each family, including with the national police database (Garda Vetting).

Lucan Centre and Homestay Facilities

Lucan

Students will stay in twin rooms with a student of the same gender and age. Each room has an ensuite bathroom. Students will have access WiFi and lots of communal areas. Students will be given 3 meals per day and snacks will be provided. Laundry facilities are available to students staying longer than 1 week.

- Single rooms are available with an additional payment.

Homestays

Our host families all live in well-maintained houses, often with access to a garden. Students will be provided with a comfortable bedroom, either twin or single. Students will have access to the host's WiFi. Students usually share the bathroom with the host family. Students are welcome to join the family in the communal areas of the house. Students will be given 3 meals per day which are often eaten together with the family. Laundry facilities are available to students staying longer than 1 week.

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.

Booking Lucan Centre, Host Family and Transfers

To book the Lucan Centre or host family, please provide us with all holiday arrangements and homestay requirements.

Lucan Centre & homestay fees vary depending on the package you have booked.

For all stays in the Lucan Centre & homestay, we presume a transfer is required.

Please note that we need as much time as possible to arrange accommodation and transfers for students so please inform us of your child's holiday plans well in advance, at least 2 weeks before. This includes half terms, exeat weekends, Christmas and Easter, as well as travel plans when they arrive in Ireland and leave at the end of the year.

Changes to Bookings

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.

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. If a refund is to be made, any administration fees plus 10% of the accommodation fees will not be refunded.

Should you wish to cancel your child's transfer booking, two working days' notice in writing is required for a refund to be considered. If a refund is to be made, any administration fees plus 10% of the transfer fees will not be refunded.

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.

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, BSI will arrange emergency homestay accommodation for them. If a parent cannot be contacted, BSI will arrange services for the Student, e.g. accommodation or taxi transfers. In these cases BSI will charge from the Emergency Fund Account. In the case of Basic guardianship packages, the parent agrees to pay the fees for the additional services.

Flights

Dates

We facilitate students travelling on the following days with airport assistance

- The date school reopens plus the next 2 days (for example, if School opens on a Sunday, we offer airport assistance on Sunday, Monday & Tuesday)
- Date school closes plus the 2 days before (for example if School closes on a Friday, we offer airport assistance on Wednesday, Thursday & Friday)

Times

Students are permitted to travel on flights

- Departing Ireland between 10 am - 8 pm
- Arriving in Ireland between 10 am - 8 pm

(please note that some schools may have additional restrictions on when students can travel)

Please do not book flights outside of these dates & times without first contacting us to see if it's possible and if so what additional charges will apply.

Individual transfers are expensive and we are always aware that we want to help our clients to save money. We do try and arrange for our students to share taxis with other BSI Guardianship students where possible. If you want your child to share a taxi with another student and the school can organise that and add it to their account then we are very happy with that situation and trust the drivers that the schools use.

We do not allow students who are under 16 to travel independently and we advise against any student booking their own taxi. We would also warn you that a metered taxi at an airport costs considerably more than a prebooked taxi.

Also we urge you to instruct your child to NEVER GET IN A CAR OF A STRANGER. There are unscrupulous drivers at airports who take students to their destination and then charge them huge amounts of money. When your child gets into his pre-booked car organised by BSI the driver will know his or her name. If a student cannot find their driver they should call us immediately for instructions. Students using our drivers never have to pay them any cash as we will invoice the cost to you.

Contagious Pandemics

In the event of a contagious pandemic, BSI will do everything possible to keep our students and host families safe and well. We will continuously monitor the situation and follow the advice of Health Service (HSE). We will also be in contact with your child's school to ensure they are following guidelines and keeping your child safe.

If necessary, we will help you with travel arrangements to help your child fly home. We can arrange quarantine facilities for your child if needed, usually with a host family. If your child needs to leave the school, e.g. for half term, we can arrange accommodation and transport for them providing they are not displaying any symptoms or have not been in contact with anyone displaying symptoms or with a positive test result.

Transition Year Information

Most schools require students to undertake a period of work experience during the transition year.

This may be several weeks spread throughout the year or a two-week block. Please refer to the school calendar for more information.

For students who's work experience is Monday 29th January - Friday 11th February we will be running a work experience residential at an additional cost of €1000 for the 2 weeks. Students will complete a number of stands, including

- Leadership Stand
- Money Stand
 - The following topics will be covered, Spending & Saving, Earning & Income, Credit & Debt, Investing, Financial Decision Making
- Volunerring Stand
 - Students will complete a project in the local community
- Cultural Stand

Students will also work on a project throughout the 2 weeks. On completion of this project students will receive a certificate of attainment.

To book in for this please [Book Here](#)

For other periods of work experience we are position to organise work experience placements for students but below are some useful resources to help in the search.

A database of work placements https://careersportal.ie/workx/student_search.php

Transition Year Placement @ Microsoft Ireland: The Work Experience course last 1 week. The course takes place in two periods; Period 1 – early November-December, Period 2 – end of January to early March. Location: South County Business Park, Leopardstown, Dublin 18. Last year there were 700+ applications and program has just 60 available places. So competition is really high. Students must register on www.careersportal.ie in the Work Experience section or contact Microsoft directly.

Dublin Barista School World Barista Association (WBA) Courses Dublin Barista School offers over 20 different coffee-related courses. Specialise in training students with no experience to a level whereby they can get a full time or part time job in the coffee industry. This skill is recognised around the world and can be transferred to any country. <https://dublinbaristaschool.ie/course/barista-workshop>

Compute TY Programme Contact Christine.Stears@computing.dcu.ie / 01-7005237
DCU's School of Computing runs programmes covering the following; Web design, App Inventor and Introduction to Programming. Students may elect to do only one stream. The overall content offers a broad range of computing skills. <https://www.dcu.ie/computing>

Intel TY Programme Communication and (early) applications via email Intel offers 3 programmes aimed at TY students; "Social innovation & Entrepreneurship" & "The Intel Experience Program" and "Cutting Edge Careers" (both at intel.ireland.corporate.affairs@intel.com)
<http://www.intel.ie/content/www/ie/en/education/secondary-school-program> (link doesn't seem to be active currently)

Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Studies TY Programme Experience during one week what studying Pharmacy is all about TCD's School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Studies runs two programmes for Transition Year Students, in October and in February. Application deadline for these are in September and December respectively. Formal applications should be sent to the transition year coordinator, Asst. Prof. Fabio Boylan (fabio.boylan@tcd.ie) http://pharmacy.tcd.ie/news/TY_Programme.php

Tourism Ireland jobs and placements

[Work Experience in Tourism & Hospitality | CareersPortal.ie](#)

Airfield Estate: Each year Airfield Estate offers Transition Year students the opportunity to apply for a 1-week placement where they will get hands-on work throughout the Estate. From helping out in the farmyard, training with our kitchen team to customer service students will get the flavour of working at a busy working farm, gardens and visitor experience. Applications will open on 1st August 2023. The deadline for applications will be 18th August 2023. For more information [Here](#)

Transition Year Balls & Parties

From time to time we hear of Transition Year Balls being held. Please note that these are never organised by the school but by outside companies. All schools require students to stay out of school for the weekend if they are attending these events.

Boarding Schools Ireland will not be in a position to offer accommodation for these events. Students will either need to stay with a friend or an adult over the age of 25.

Ending your Guardianship Agreement

The guardianship service fee is non-refundable.

The agreement shall take effect once it is signed (or the online booking form is submitted) and the agreed fee is received. In the case of a visa refusal, an admin fee of 10% of the payment received or the registration fee (whichever is larger) will be charged once a refusal letter is received.

Being asked to leave the Guardianship Programme

If your child does not follow BSI'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:

- Not attending classes
- Abusive behaviour
- Not following all rules relevant to their stay in Ireland
- 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:

1. Give them an official verbal and written warning and notify you as parents. This aims to stop them from repeating any offence.
2. 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.

