



Free Time / Unsupervised Time / Curfew – 2024 Policy and Procedure

Definitions

Free Time – this is time allowed to children during the programme for them to have some time to explore a locality, practise their English and spend time with their friends. Free time is normally granted on-site or on excursions. It is planned and remotely supervised.

Unsupervised Time – this is time when children are not directly or remotely supervised as this is not practicable. Primarily this refers to the travel time to and from homestay to school.

Curfew – these are the times when children must be back in their accommodation, with light-out to follow shortly after.

Policy

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that we are putting into practice the Safeguarding Policy and by so doing, putting the best interest of children first. There are some general principles that apply and then some very specific requirements depending on the different factors, such as homestay or residence, on or off-site.

General Principles

- All children must have stored on their phones the emergency contact number
- All children must be inducted in basic safety issues – such as road crossing and what to do if they find themselves lost
- All children must keep their phones charged
- All children must be where they are supposed to be, when they are supposed to be there
- We must know where children are at all times

Free Time

- We must decide if free time is to be granted – this is a decision to be informed by risk assessments and authorised by a senior staff member
- We must be very clear with children the start time and end time of free time and before allowing them off on free time clearly show them the meeting point, and a reminder of what to do if they are worried or lost.

- Children should be in groups of no fewer than three to be allowed free time
- Children to be informed of any potential dangers e.g. busy roads, building works etc

Unsupervised Time

This primarily refers to the travel time from homestay to school and back again. This is best managed by:

- Hosts showing the students where the nearest/best bus stop is to take them to school and/or the walking route
- Staff systems to help students with the correct bus stop for the return journey
- Children being housed at least two to a host so that they can and should always travel together
- Clear communications between hosts and children for expected times home and meal times

Curfew

For the good health, well-being and safety of all children we operate an age appropriate curfew policy both for homestay and residential accommodation. The standard curfews are tabled below

Under 14 years of age – not allowed out unless accompanied by hosts or staff

14- and 15-year olds – 21:30

16- and 17-year olds - 22:00

Absent or Missing Students

In the event of the above procedures not working and there is a missing student then the procedures outlined in the Absent or Missing Child Procedures 2024 will apply.