

PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Choosing the right Language school for your child is a big decision, particularly when in another country. Here at LanguageUK we go to great lengths to create nurturing and supportive environments, both within and beyond the classroom, so that your child feels safe, secure and valued during their time with us. We place great value on the mental and physical well-being of students and staff alike. For all students, participation in education offers challenges and opportunities. We aim to help students capitalise on the positive mental health benefits of education while identifying and providing appropriate support to those who are more vulnerable to its pressures.

The duties of every teacher and staff member in LanguageUK include:

- promoting and safeguarding the health, welfare, and safety of students
- working in partnership with parents, leaders, homestay providers, and outside agencies if required.
- providing advice and guidance to students on issues related to their course
- contributing towards good order and the wider needs of the school

Objectives of Pastoral Care

- providing **personal support** appropriate to the needs of every individual student or students in groups. (Attendance, late coming, health, homesickness, and personal welfare matters)
- providing **support** on the school timetable (Curriculum, learning and teaching, progress, reporting, attainment.)
- providing a programme of social activities appropriate to the needs of all students
- contributing to the **development of a positive school** ethos which seeks to promote the self-esteem of every student at LanguageUK (School aims, values, rules and ethos. Behaviour management, recognition of achievement, antibullying, equal rights, citizenship, safety and security.)

We only offer homestay accommodation for our groups and U18 individual students (living with a local host family). While homestay hosts do not receive the same level of training as our staff, they all undergo a rigorous recruitment process, including safeguarding training, a house inspection and DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks, and are supported by our full-time Accommodation Officer.

Some of our LanguageUK staff are First Aid and Fire Marshall trained. Health and Safety is our top priority; we **have Health and Safety Officers Ece Inan (level 3), Chris Hopson -DoS (Level 3) and Kerem Sahin, the Principal**. Along with Suleyman Erdogan, who is our Maintenance/handyman, responds efficiently to any maintenance issues that arise; this ensures that all LanguageUK buildings are fit for purpose and provide an environment that meets students' welfare needs and promotes learning.

Students' attendance&attainment is monitored by **Director of Studies, Chris Hopson (Level 3)** in conjunction with the safeguarding team, and teachers. This fosters a culture of accountability and responsibility among staff and students alike, enabling the smooth

progression of students' learning and personal development. It also promotes the identification of health or emotional difficulties, as poor attendance or deterioration in learning achievement can often be an indication of underlying problems. Once a problem has been identified, staff can work with students to help them cope with challenges and improve outcomes.

General Health

We ensure that our students understand how to navigate the National Health Service (NHS), advising them in choosing the right service for their requirements and booking appointments on their behalf. We help our students arrange pharmacy visits for minor complaints, dentist appointments, General Practitioner (GP) appointments, and referrals to wider services for more specific ailments. We can also accompany students to their appointments if they wish.

Someone to talk to:

DSL level 3 Ece Inan Specialist Safeguarding Lead

Level 3 Chris Hopson- Director of Studies

LanguageUK operates an 'open-door policy,' whereby students know that they can approach any teacher or member of LanguageUK staff should they have any problems or just need someone to talk to Ece Inan is also trained in Youth Mental Health Awareness and MHFA.

The DSL is trained to advise on general health, mental health, and wellbeing and can arrange appointments with outside services. The Head of Safeguarding liaises regularly with the Principal and other school staff, regarding how best to support students with additional needs, both in their academic and personal development.

We also recommend a range of helplines, websites, and local services if students wish to seek advice independently and in confidence. Information about these external support services is displayed throughout the school and in the student handbook.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental illness or mental health difficulties can affect students at any point in their lives. The underlying causes vary from person to person but may be the result of major life events such as the end of a relationship, bereavement or leaving home and can impact significantly on how students feel about themselves. Symptoms may beset anyone at any time, giving rise to ongoing conditions that could interfere with the student's school experience and have implications for academic study.

At LanguageUK, we understand that our students may be required to:

- separate from family and existing friends
- move to a new area or country
- experience a range of different cultures
- communicate in a language in which they are not fully fluent
- meet unfamiliar modes of learning, teaching, and assessment
- cope with the physical and emotional changes of adolescence and early adulthood

Our staff, in particular tutors, will be alert to signs that a student is not coping well or may need support.

Some of the difficulties that students may present with include:

- problems with anxiety and stress; social anxiety

- depression; loneliness
- adjusting to a new culture; homesickness
- problems with family, friends or intimate relationships
- sexuality
- sexual problems
- bereavement and loss
- study problems, including difficulties with writing, speaking and putting things off (procrastination) and perfectionism
- racism and harassment
- sexual abuse; coping with trauma; sexual harassment
- disability
- feeling suicidal
- eating disorders
- addictions, including alcohol, drugs and gambling

Mental Health First Aiders: Ece Inan and Stuart Duvall

A Note on Safeguarding, Consent and Confidentiality

All LanguageUK staff are trained in safeguarding. ‘Safeguarding’ means:

- protecting children and young people from maltreatment
- preventing the impairment of their health and development
- ensuring they have access to safe and consistent care
- taking action to ensure all children and young people have the best outcomes

LanguageUK will therefore be alert to signs of abuse and neglect and will follow Kent’s Safeguarding Children Board procedures to ensure that our young people receive appropriate and effective support and protection.

The law requires us to pass on information that gives rise to a concern about a child or young person’s welfare and to keep records of safeguarding concerns. LanguageUK staff will seek to discuss any concerns, including referrals to other agencies, with both the student and their parents/carers unless informing the parents/carers would put the child or young person at risk of significant harm.

LanguageUK will put the student’s rights and wishes at the forefront of any decision about their welfare, including decisions around consent and confidentiality. However, the welfare and safety of the child or young person is paramount and overrides all other considerations.

Maintaining cultural and religious beliefs

We are experienced in supporting students from a broad range of countries, cultures, and religions and actively encourage young people to practice their own faiths and beliefs in a positive and open environment.

LanguageUK can offer:

- Cultural and religious celebrations (e.g. Eid)
- On-site prayer room
- School chefs experienced in catering for specialist diets, including preparing Halal meals
- Supporting young people to access local places of worship.

Keeping in touch

We encourage young people to keep in regular contact with family and friends while they are in our care, providing support to maintain close relationships through:

- WhatsApp
- Email
- Telephone

Policy written March 2020

Review date: March 2021

Reviewed November 2021

Reviewed November 2022

Revised November 2023

Revised: December 2024