

CASTLE SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

Student Care and Pastoral Support Policy

Policy owner: School Management

Applies to: All students, including students under 18, and staff involved in student support

1. Policy Statement

Castle School of English is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and supportive environment for all students.

We understand that students studying in a new country may experience problems such as homesickness, cultural adjustment, accommodation concerns, loneliness or difficulties settling into a new environment.

The school aims to:

- help students settle into school and life in Brighton;
- make sure students know where to get help;
- respond to welfare and pastoral concerns;
- provide appropriate practical support;
- identify problems as early as possible;
- provide additional support for students under 18; and
- treat all students fairly and respectfully.

Student care is a shared responsibility. All staff should help create an environment where students feel comfortable asking for help.

2. Student Orientation

When students join the school, they receive information about:

- the school and their course;
- school rules and attendance;
- health and safety;
- first aid and emergency procedures;
- activities and social opportunities;
- accommodation, where applicable;
- how to contact the school; and
- how to report a concern or make a complaint.

Students under 18 receive additional information appropriate to their age and circumstances.

3. Access to Support

Students can speak to any member of staff they feel comfortable talking to.

Students may ask for help with:

- homesickness or cultural adjustment;
- accommodation problems;
- difficulties with other students;
- loneliness or social difficulties;
- problems with their course or attendance;
- practical problems;
- general wellbeing;
- concerns about activities or excursions; or
- any concern about their safety or welfare.

Students are encouraged to ask for help before a problem becomes serious.

Depending on the situation, support may be provided by teachers, administrative staff, Student Services, Academic Management or School Management.

4. Student Wellbeing

Staff should be aware of changes that may suggest a student is having difficulties. These may include:

- changes in attendance;
- repeated lateness;
- becoming withdrawn;
- changes in behaviour;
- appearing very upset or distressed; or
- concerns raised by other students or staff.

Staff should speak to students sensitively and avoid making assumptions.

The school can provide basic pastoral and practical support but is not a medical or specialist mental health service. Where necessary, students may be advised to contact appropriate external services or healthcare providers.

In an emergency, staff should contact **999** or follow the school's emergency procedures.

5. Accommodation

Where the school arranges accommodation, students should report any problems as soon as possible.

This may include:

- problems with a host family;
- difficulties with meals or household arrangements;
- unsuitable living conditions;
- conflict in the household;
- cultural misunderstandings; or
- concerns about safety.

The school will speak with the student and, where appropriate, the accommodation provider to try to find a suitable solution.

Serious welfare or safeguarding concerns will be dealt with under the school's Safeguarding Policy.

6. Social Integration and Student Relationships

The school encourages students to meet and interact with others through:

- classroom activities;
- social activities;
- excursions; and
- other school opportunities.

Students are expected to treat each other with respect.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination or threatening behaviour will not be accepted and will be dealt with under the relevant school procedures.

7. Students Under 18

Students under 18 require additional care and welfare support.

The school will consider:

- age and maturity;
- appropriate supervision;
- accommodation;
- travel and activities;
- emergency contacts;
- medical and welfare needs;
- attendance; and
- safeguarding concerns.

Parents, guardians or group leaders may be contacted where appropriate and in accordance with school procedures.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported according to the school's Safeguarding Policy.

8. Health, Individual Needs and Inclusion

Students should inform the school about relevant health, accessibility or welfare needs where these may affect their safety or participation.

The school will consider reasonable support for individual needs and will work in line with its Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

Relevant personal information will be handled confidentially and shared only when there is a legitimate reason to do so, including when necessary to protect a student's safety or welfare.

9. Complaints and Concerns

Students have the right to raise concerns about their experience at Castle School of English.

Students can speak to a member of staff or make a formal complaint according to the school's Complaints Policy.

All concerns will be taken seriously and handled fairly and sensitively.

Students will not be disadvantaged for raising a genuine concern or complaint.

10. Staff Responsibilities

School Management is responsible for ensuring appropriate student care arrangements are in place and that serious welfare concerns are dealt with appropriately.

Teachers and Staff should:

- treat students with dignity and respect;
- create a welcoming environment;
- listen to students appropriately;
- identify and report welfare concerns;
- maintain professional boundaries; and
- follow safeguarding procedures when necessary.

Staff should not provide medical treatment or specialist counselling unless they are appropriately qualified.

11. Records and Confidentiality

Significant pastoral concerns and actions taken will be recorded where appropriate.

Information will be stored securely and handled according to the school's data protection procedures.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where information needs to be shared to protect a student or another person, respond to a safeguarding concern, deal with a serious health and safety risk or meet a legal requirement.

12. Monitoring and Review

The school will monitor student care through student and staff feedback, welfare concerns, complaints, accommodation feedback and other relevant information.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and when there are significant changes to legislation, safeguarding requirements, school services or British Council Accreditation UK requirements.

Version: 1.2 – Reviewed 2026