

ACS
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL
COBHAM

WELCOME GUIDE

Important Contact Details

EMERGENCY (POLICE, FIRE, AMBULANCE)	**999**
Urgent Medical Enquiry	111
To report crime or other police concerns that do not require an emergency response	101
Operator Assistance UK	100
Operator Assistance International	155
Directory Enquiries, London	118500
Directory Enquiries, International	118505
Speaking Clock	123
ACS Cobham International School www.acs-schools.com/acs-cobham	01932 867251
ACS Cobham Housing Office cobhamhousing@acs-schools.com	01932 867251

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Welcome from Head of School, Barnaby Sandow

Welcome to ACS Cobham International School where our diverse community creates a culture of global citizenship and academic excellence. We celebrate scholarship, reward responsibility and are aware of the importance of our role in inspiring the world's next thinkers and doers. By promoting a broad and balanced curriculum we are not preparing our students for a specific vocation, but we are enabling them with the skills they need to prepare themselves for whatever life may bring.

We foster independent critical thinking, an intrinsic love of learning, and a fundamental belief in the worth of each individual. The opportunities to develop beyond the classroom provide some of the most memorable experiences that belonging to our community can bring. These elements are key to our mission of producing well rounded, resilient individuals that can flourish on the global stage. Our team continually strives to promote the growth of the whole person that is able to imagine better, aim high and make it happen. We see this as a pathway that inspires positive change in every one of us that is involved in the process.

Our diversity is our distinction and our key values include acting with kindness. Our Alumni testify that this international contact has set them up to prosper now that they have set off on their own paths. As well as having relished their time being a part of this constituency in these exceptional surroundings, they now feel that they are at an advantage in the wider world.

The embodiment of our school's values is the welcome that will be extended to you and your family. Our parent group is an active and vibrant part of the ACS scene. The induction for each student means that a feeling of belonging is not far away. There are people here for you, reaching out helps us provide a better service, so please do ask if anything is not clear.

This booklet is your first introduction to our community.

Welcome to ACS Cobham, I hope that you will be very happy here.

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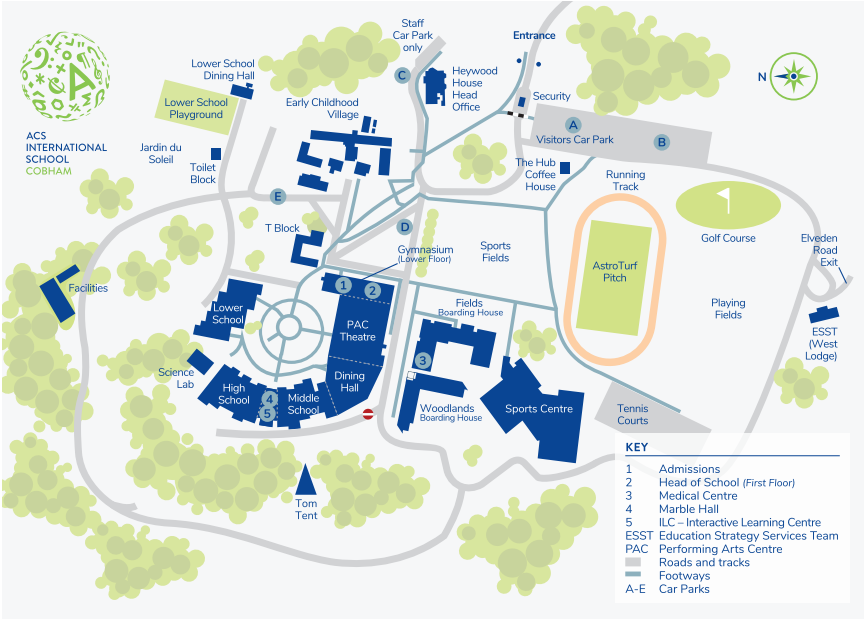
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ABOUT ACS COBHAM



About this Guide

This book has been created to support our new families as they start their journey at ACS International School Cobham.

The purpose of this guide is to provide vital brief information about our school but also further information on our surrounding area for families who are new to Cobham.

The majority of the key information regarding your child and the school will be found on our schoology and powerschool digital platforms. You would have received information regarding this in your welcome information.

We have a very strong parent community at ACS Cobham and to join our PSO (Parent School Organisation) please find their contact details within the PSO section of our schoology platform.

Important ACS Cobham Contacts

Main Switchboard (Monday-Friday)	**01932 867251**
Head of School	bsandow@acs-schools.com
Barnaby Sandow *Head of School*	
Simon Leyshon *Deputy Head of School*	sleyshon@acs-schools.com
Amy Bates *Head of School's PA*	abates@acs-schools.com
Early Childhood	**01932 869752**
Jane Kullmann *Early Childhood Associate Principal*	jkullmann@acs-schools.com
Lower School	**01932 869754**
Judith Kingsbury *Lower School Assistant Principal*	jkingsbury@acs-schools.com
Sarah Clarke *Lower School Secretary*	sclarke1@acs-schools.com
Middle School	**01932 869703**
Robert Crowther *Middle School Principal*	rcrowther@acs-schools.com
Kirstie Sheard *Middle School Assistant Principal, Academic*	ksheard@acs-schools.com
Darren Sheldrake *Middle School Assistant Principal, Pastoral*	dsheldrake@acs-schools.com
Dawn Druitt *Middle School Secretary*	ddruitt@acs-schools.com
Virginia Immergluck *Middle School Secretary*	vimmergluck@acs-schools.com
High School	**01932 869708**
Fred Bordaguibel-Labayle *High School Principal*	fbordaguibel@acs-schools.com
Amanda Briggs *High School Assistant Principal, Academic*	abriggs@acs-schools.com
Luke Welch *High School Assistant Principal, Pastoral*	lwelch@acs-schools.com
Will Ryan *High School Secretary*	wryan@acs-schools.com
Boarding	**01932 869770**
Sara Thomas *Head of Boarding*	sthomas2@acs-schools.com
Kate Morris *Woodlands House Secretary*	kmorris@acs-schools.com
Dave Schuchter *Fields Houseparent*	dschuchter@acs-schools.com
Transport	**01932 588328**
Robert Barley-Cox *Transport Manager*	rbarleycox@acs-schools.com
Sports	
Steve Adams *Head of Sports*	sadams@acs-schools.com
Sharon Treves *Sports Centre Secretary*	streves@acs-schools.com
Medical Centre/School Nurse	**01932 869736** cobhamnurses@acs-schools.com
Security Hut	**01932 869707**

About ACS Cobham

What to do first . . . for newcomers to the UK

1. Find your closest hospital with an A&E (Accident & Emergency/Emergency Room) by entering your postcode at: www.nhs.uk/service-search

2. Register with your local GP (General Practitioner).
   Find your nearest NHS physicians at www.nhs.uk/service-search

3. Get a UK mobile phone number. Check the Housing and Utilities section of this Welcome Guide for advice on mobile phones in the UK.

4. Download the Citymapper Transport App to help navigate public transportation.

5. Schedule appointments for telephone, internet, gas, electricity and water services, as well as getting a TV Licence.

   Check the Housing and Utilities section of this Welcome Guide for more information.

6. Purchase car insurance and get information about driving in the UK. Check the Transport section of this Welcome Guide for more information.

What to do first . . . for parents

1. **ACCESS THE ONLINE INFORMATION SYSTEM**
   Once you have enrolled and paid your fees, the Admissions Office will provide your Forms Online username and password, and you will also haveaccess to the PSO website. Your child will be registered in Powerschool, our online education technology platform, and gain access to Schoology our learning management system. Parents will get information about access to Powerschool and Schoology from your child's school division. You can view information such as grade reports to follow academic progress as well as important information about ACS.

2. **PURCHASE SCHOOL SUPPLIES**
   Each school division (Early Childhood, Lower School, Middle School, High School) will provide a list of supplies in the online summer mailing.

3. **PURCHASE PE (PHYSICAL EDUCATION) UNIFORM AND KIT**
   Each school division (Early Childhood, Lower School, Middle School, High School) will provide this information in the online summer mailing.

4. **ACTIVATE SCHOOL LUNCH ACCOUNT**
   After your child is enrolled, you should receive a Parent Pay account activation email from finance@acs-schools.com. Follow the instructions on the email to set up the account and add credit to your child's catering account. If you have any queries or do not receive your account activation email, please contact finance@acs-schools.com.

5. **CHECK THE ACS COBHAM CAMPUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS ON SCHOOLOGY**

FAQs About ACS Cobham Parent School Organisation

WHAT IS THE PSO?
The PSO stands for 'Parent School Organisation'. Its Board is composed of a volunteer group of parents that meet once a month to discuss current topics and liaise closely with the school administration. Members are elected annually and can serve two years in each position. A list of Board positions and who currently occupies them can be found on the PSO Pages on ACS Intranet.

WHAT IS A CRG?
The CRG stands for Country Representative Group and consists of Country Representatives for around 40 different nationalities. They support a variety of international events, flag-raisings and our Native Language Programme.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A LIAISON AND CRG?
Most liaisons represent a grade level or division. The Country Representatives represent her/his native country within the CRG and the CRG Liaison is part of the PSO Board. All liaisons are Board positions.

LIAISONS: WHO ARE MINE?
There are Liaisons for various functions: The grade level/divisional Liaisons are the parent representatives for each grade in the Middle and High School and in the Lower School and Early Childhood, the entire Division. They meet regularly with the divisional heads and organise grade level/divisional events. You can find their names and contact details on the PSO section of the website. You are encouraged to get in touch with them if you have any questions. In addition, the PSO Board includes Liaisons for the Performing Arts, Welcoming and Athletics.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

The PSO Board and its Committees are always looking for volunteers. A good place to learn about and sign up for activities is at the various grade level coffees early in the school year. Or get in touch with the PSO via their webpage any time!

Transportation

WHAT TYPES OF BUS TRANSPORTATION ARE THERE?

ACS Cobham primarily operates a student door-to-door service, which picks up your child/children from outside your house in the morning and drops off again after leaving the school at 3:45pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 2:45pm on Wednesdays. This service is available for all students from Pre-K upwards. There are also Shuttle Services, which pick up from various Pick Up Points (PUPS) in the morning and drop off after school. This service is offered to students from Pre-K upwards for mornings only and Middle School upwards for afternoons.

LATE BUS: HOW, WHERE, WHEN, ROUTE, AND DOES IT COST MONEY?

The Late Bus Service is a free non-bookable service that drops students off at various drop-off points. These buses will depart ACS at 5:45pm every school day and normally finishes at the end of May. This service is offered to all students from Middle School upwards. A list of destinations can be obtained from Phil Bridger in the Transportation Office (philbridger@acs-schools.com).

HOW DOES DROP-OFF BY PARENTS WORK?

The drop-off line is strictly designed to let children out of your car and move on. If you need time to organise yourself, you should park in the upper lot by the entrance to the school.

WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR PARKING ON THE ROAD INTO SCHOOL?

There is strictly NO parking on the road leading into the school and ACS Cobham; it needs to be kept free for emergency vehicles at all times.

WHY IS THERE ALWAYS SUCH A TRAFFIC LINE IN THE MORNING?

There are still many parents who like to drop their children off in the morning and traffic exiting the school is often slow. The Portsmouth Road is busy in the mornings and evenings, so it takes time for cars to exit the school. The school administration is constantly looking for ways to alleviate the situation, but needs to co-operate with Elmbridge Council on the matter.

ACS COBHAM BUSING ROUTE

The green shading, on the following page's map, shows the area the bus service covers.

For more information, contact our Transport manager, Rob Barley-Cox (rbarleycox@acs-schools.com).

Health and Safety/Security on Campus

WHAT ARE THE AFTER-SCHOOL RULES ON CAMPUS?

Early Childhood, Lower School and Middle School students are NOT allowed to remain on campus unsupervised. The Homework Club or the Library offer supervised areas after school. Please contact the librarians in each division for opening hours.

WHY CAN'T MY CHILD GO ON HIS OWN TO THE SPORTS CENTRE TO WATCH HIS FRIENDS PLAY SPORTS?

School policies and procedures do not allow Lower and Middle School students to remain on campus unsupervised. If parents are able to supervise younger students, they are welcome to attend the games.

WHY IS THE PEDESTRIAN GATE ALWAYS OPEN IF THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A SECURE CAMPUS?

Every effort is made to make the school a safe place without making it a prison. No student is allowed to leave campus during school hours without a permission slip. Staff at the Security Hut (by the car barrier) collect those slips from students exiting campus.

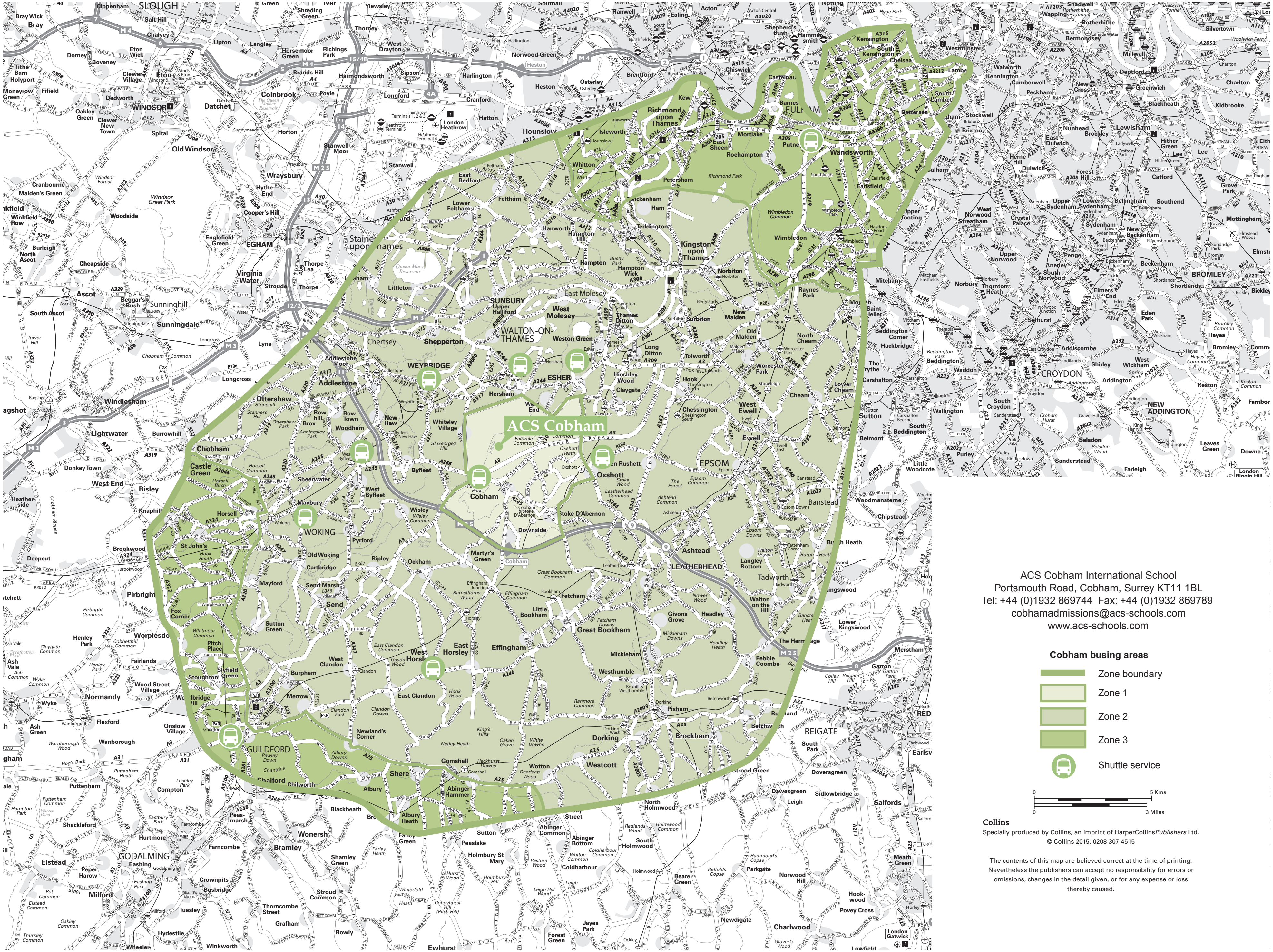
CAN I TAKE MY CHILDREN TO THE LOWER SCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PLAYGROUNDS AFTER SCHOOL?

No this is not permitted.

WHERE IS THE NURSE?

The nurses' office is located on the ground floor of the Fields Boarding House, Fields. It can be found by entering through the near side of the building.

Please park and drive responsibly on the school campus.



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Tel: +44 (0)1932 869744 Fax: +44 (0)1932 869789
cobhamadmissions@acs-schools.com
www.acs-schools.com

Cobham busing areas

- Zone boundary
- Zone 1
- Zone 2
- Zone 3
- Shuttle service

0 — 5 Kms
0 — 3 Miles

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The contents of this map are believed correct at the time of printing. Nevertheless the publishers can accept no responsibility for errors or omissions, changes in the detail given, or for any expense or loss thereby caused.

After-School Activities

AFTER SCHOOL: WHAT IS AVAILABLE?
Lower, Middle and High School each have their own offering of After School Clubs and Activities and it is best to consult each division's information on Schoology for details. In addition, the Divisional Libraries are open after school—please contact the librarians in each division for opening hours. Homework Clubs may be offered (check with each division). There are also seasonal sports offerings for Low, Middle and High School for which training takes place after school.

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS?
Check Schoology or contact the Sports Centre Reception Desk for offerings outside of the School Athletics Programme.

HOW DO I FIND OUT ABOUT THE 'NATIVE LANGUAGE ENRICHMENT (NLE) PROGRAMME?
The NLE programme is offered via the Country Representatives as a free language enrichment programme for native speakers or students who have become reasonably fluent in the language of a country their parents have been posted to. It is also available to internationally adopted children who have been studying the language of their birth. Contact the NLE coordinator (cobhamnlecoordinator@acs-schools.com) for detailed information.

Sports

WHERE CAN I BUY ACS COBHAM COUGAR SPORTS CLOTHING?
The ACS Cobham Athletic Booster Club sells sportswear such as T shirts and caps at www.acs-spiritwear.co.uk to raise funds to support the athletics program. The PE kit needed for school sports lessons can be purchased at Unismart (a store in Cobham near the Waitrose supermarket) or ordered online at www.unismart.co.uk.

HOW DO YOU SIGN UP FOR SWIMMING LESSONS?
ACS Swim School offer lessons after school on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. There is also an option for 1 to 1 lessons. We also have Swim Team training before and after school running as part of the After School Sports programme. The best point of contact for any enquiries is the Head of Swimming - Glen Melson.

WHAT SPORTS CAN MY CHILD PARTICIPATE IN?
Any sport that is offered during the respective Season can be tried out for. There are often large numbers of students that try out for limited numbers on the various teams. The coaches will look at ability and age and determine who fits into which team. Additional teams are sometimes added if demand exceeds open slots.

HOW DO I BOOK THE POOL FOR A BIRTHDAY PARTY?
You need to make the booking at the Sports Centre Reception Desk.

WHAT IS THE SPIRIT CLUB?
The ACS Spirit Club is a parent-run organisation that supports the sports effort at ACS. They run the Sports Centre Café during games, design and sell Cougar gear, support award ceremonies and use their profits to further enhance athletic equipment. It is a great place to get involved if you are interested in active participation in ACS Cougar sports!

At School – General

DO THE STUDENTS HAVE A DRESS CODE?
There is no specific dress code at ACS, but guidelines for appropriate clothing are published in the various divisional handbooks.

HOW CAN MY CHILD ATTEND A FLAG-RAISING?
Depending on the division, your child will be escorted to the various flag-raisings or will need to hand in a permission slip to the divisional secretary.

CLASS LISTS: HOW DO I GET A CLASS LIST?
The class lists for High School and Middle School are posted during Orientation, which takes place a couple of days before the beginning of the new school year. In Early Childhood and Lower School, homeroom coordinators/parents will distribute to parents. During the school year, it is best to contact your divisional secretary or Grade Level Liaison for information.

HOME ROOM COORDINATOR: WHO IS MINE?
This is only relevant for Middle and Lower School, where students are organised by Home Rooms. Contact your divisional secretary or Grade Level Liaison for information.

CONFERENCES: HOW DO I SIGN UP AND WHICH DAY AM I ON?
There is a new online sign-up system in place now for all divisions. This allows you to pick the teacher and time slot you would like to secure online. Your divisional secretary will send you a note to advise when booking opens.

WHAT DO I DO WITH MY CHILDREN DURING PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES?
Please check with your child's school division for guidance on the usual procedure, as sometimes students are expected or required to attend and other times they may not.

WHAT IS THE MAP TEST? WHAT HAPPENS WITH THE SCORES?
MAP stands for 'Measures of Academic Progress' and is a standardised test available in Reading, Language Use, Mathematics and Science. It provides a continuous roadmap as to where each student is performing relative to curriculum or other standards and is used as an internal assessment tool to help educators develop targeted instructional strategies. The test is dynamically built, based on the achievement level of every student and is untimed; results are given immediately. Because the data can be looked at historically and is consistent from season to season, growth can be measured and could be used as a placement tool in Middle School and High School.

WHAT ARE IB, AP, NHS AND SAT?
These are various terms used in the High School for either: a diploma, degree, test or society.

The IB is an acronym for the International Baccalaureate, the AP for US Advanced Placement Courses, the NHS is the National Honour Society and SAT stands for 'Standard Aptitude Test' which is a Test required by most US universities.

HOW DO I COMPLAIN IF I SEE INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR BY STUDENTS ON CAMPUS?
It is best to contact your Grade Level Liaison – they will raise the issue with the Divisional Head and make sure you receive feedback.

IS THERE A SUPPLY LIST FOR HIGH SCHOOL?
Not really; each course will have its own requirements and students are expected to provide the appropriate material.

WHERE CAN I GET SCHOOL SUPPLIES (OFF CAMPUS)?
Each village tends to have a school-supplies store and most supermarkets have a decent section. In Cobham, Farrants shop is well-stocked for school supplies. WH Smith is a large stationery chain found in most bigger towns, and you can also order on amazon.co.uk. The Unismart store in Cobham sells PE kit, sportswear and performance wear for ACS Cobham students.

ACS Cobham Dictionary

Word	Explanation
Academic Dean	Responsible for academic advising and scheduling of High School students.
Academic Principal	Directs the planning, delivery and ongoing improvement of curriculum, assessment and instructional practices within the school.
Activity camps	Fun day camps for children led by staff during summer holidays on campus.
Alumni	Students who have previously attended ACS.
Advanced Placement (AP)	US university-level courses taught in High School.
Artist-in-Residence	Programme bringing artists and other professionals to ACS to work with students, parents or teachers.
Assembly, Lower School	Grade-level assemblies are performances or academic activities presented by the students, which parents may be invited to attend.
Assembly, Middle School /High School	Grade-level or whole school division meetings for sharing information or presenting awards, which parents may be invited to attend.

American Women of Surrey (AWS)	External club that welcomes and assists newcomers to the UK; everyone with a child attending ACS can join. Many ACS parents are members. AWS organises events, excursions, toddlers groups, etc.
Bank Holiday	No school; banks, post offices and some local shops will be closed.
Black Gates	Near the lawn next to Heywood House; an after-school pick-up point for parents.
Block Schedule	Double lessons (70-80 minutes each) in Middle School and High School.
Boy Scouts	Programme for boys aged 11-18.
Brownies	Programme for girls from Kindergarten to Grade 3.
Buddy	Current ACS student who is paired with a new student to help them settle in at school.
Bringing Up Grades (BUG)	Quarterly recognition for Middle School students who bring up their grades by at least 10%.
Cafeteria	Dining hall for students and staff.
Campus	All of the school's grounds (fenced in). It is a closed campus with 24-hour security.
Campus Calendar	The main calendar with all activities, events and meetings for the school year.
Career Day	For High School students, once a year professionals with different occupations are invited to meet with students and tell them about their careers. Students must wear field trip dress for the day.

Creative Active Service (CAS)	As part of the IB Diploma, students must complete a programme of minimum 180 hours total over Grades 11 and 12 in sports, charity work, etc.
Chaperone	An adult (staff, parent) supervising field trips, parties, dances, etc.
Coffee Morning	An informational meeting with refreshments for parents.
College Workshop	High School informational meetings for parents and students regarding preparation for university.
Concession Stand	Snack bar in Sports Centre Café where light refreshments and snacks are sold during sports events by parent volunteers.
Core Subjects/Classes	The academic subjects in each division, usually Maths, L.A, Social Studies, Language; different from 'Specials' or 'Extras'.
Cougar	School mascot; the 'cougar' name and logo is used especially by sports teams.
Counsellor	One in each division (Lower School, Middle School and High School) to provide primarily social and emotional support for students, as well as advice for parents when needed. In High School there are also 'college counsellors' who provide guidance for students with the university application process.
Country Rep	A parent representing his/her country as a member of the CRG.
Country Representative Group (CRG)	Group formed by parents representing most countries of origin of ACS students; part of PSO and helps support new

Credit	In High School a course that meets daily during the school year is worth one credit towards High School graduation requirements
Cub Scout	Boy scouts from Grades 1-5.
Disaster Relief Fund (DRF)	School-wide charity committee with student, staff and parent members. Organises fundraising and immediate support to international aid organisations when disasters occur around the world. Informs and educates ACS community as part of our role as global citizens to help those in need.
Division/Divisional	There are four divisions in the school: Early Childhood, Lower School, Middle School and High School. Each has a divisional office.
Dress Code	Each division in the school provides guidance for how students are expected to dress at school.
Early Childhood (EC)	A school division; Flopsy Bunnies, Scramblers, Pre-K and Kindergarten.
Early Childhood Village	The 'village' of white buildings located between Heywood House and T-block.
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Extra English language support for students with limited English ability.
Effort Really Counts (ERC)	Quarterly award for Middle School students who have at least 40 out of 50 effort points.
End of Year Staff Appreciation	Parents sponsor an event with refreshments to show appreciation for school staff, organised by PSO.
European Language Day	Day-long event for Middle School students organised by the World Language teachers.

Fall Staff Appreciation	Welcoming staff appreciation event organised by PSO in which parents provide snacks.
Field Trip	Students travel to museums, theatre, etc. Usually by bus.
Field Trip Dress	Middle School and High School students are required to dress appropriately for field trips off-campus and some special events on-campus, such as Career Day.
Fine Arts Booster Committee (FAB)	Support group for school music, drama and art programs organised by parent volunteers in PSO.
Flopsy Bunnies	In Early Childhood, youngest students in school are from 2 years old.
Fountain Area	Open round area in middle of Lower School, Middle School and High School with fountain in the centre.
Freshman	A Grade 9 student.
Grade Advisors	In High School each student is assigned to an advisory group with a grade advisor (teacher) who usually stays with the same students from Grade 9-12.
Head of School/Headmaster	The ACS Cobham staff member responsible for all four school divisions (Early Childhood, Lower School, Middle School, High School).
Head of School's List	Quarterly academic recognition for students in Grades 6-12 who have earned grades of A- or higher (High School) or A or higher (Middle School).
Heywood House	The original white manor house on the Heywood estate, now used as head office for all ACS schools.

High School	Grades 9-12.
Homeroom (HR)	The class that students meet with each morning for announcements and attendance.
Homeroom/HR coordinator (room parent)	One or two parents from each HR; organises HR coffee meeting, parent involvement and communication from the HR teacher and school to the parents in the HR. The PSO liaison for each grade level chooses the HR coordinator.
Homeroom/HR Teacher	The teacher responsible for a homeroom of students that meet on a daily/weekly schedule.
HR Advisor	In Middle School the HR teachers also serve as advisors to the students in their homerooms.
Honour Roll	Quarterly academic recognition for students in Grades 6-12 who have earned grades of B or higher.
Ice Cream Social	PSO-sponsored event at start of school year to welcome new families to the school with free ice cream and games for the children.
In-Service Day	No school for students; training sessions for staff.
Interactive Learning Centre (ILC)	Meeting room located on lower ground floor between Middle and High Schools (under Marble Hall).
Interim report	Middle School quarterly report on each student's progress.
International Baccalaureate (IB)	Two-year diploma programme given as an option for students in Grades 11 and 12.

International Day	Each division has a day on the school calendar to celebrate the diversity of cultures at ACS.
International Youth Sports (IYS)	Parent-run sports club outside school, mainly on the weekend. For children in Pre-K to Grade 8, it offers soccer, basketball, baseball, softball, flag football, etc. during three seasons.
ISST	International School Sports Tournament for varsity student athletes.
Junior	A Grade 11 student.
Junior Varsity (JV)	High School student sports teams, sometimes might include Middle School students on the teams.
K	Kindergarten, 5-6 year old students.
Language Arts (LA)	English language and literature class in Middle School.
Learning Support (formerly Resource)	Individual/small group learning support provided for students needing extra help with literacy, maths or English language.
Liaison	PSO parent representative of a school division or parent group, such Grade 9 liaison or CRG liaison. Acts as a 'link' between PSO, parents and school.
Locker	Lower School students each have their own un-locked cupboard for personal belongings. Middle School and High School students each have a locker in the hallway and are given a key to keep belongings safe.
Lower School	Lower School, Grades 1-4.
LSSA	London School Sports Association.

Main Parking Lot	Parking lot by main school entrance, next to security hut.
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress, an online assessment taken by all students across all campuses of ACS from Grades 2-10 twice a year (in fall and spring).
Marble Hall	Marble-floored entrance hall connecting Middle School and High School.
Medical Centre (Nurses)	Medical support centre for all students on campus staffed with nurses; on ground floor of the Fields Boardihg House.
Middle School	Grades 5-8.
Native Language Enrichment (NLE)	Lessons for students with a native language other than English.
New Parent Reception	Afternoon event with nibbles and a glass of wine for new parents to meet the head of school, divisional principals and PSO members. No children allowed.
Nurse (Medical Centre)	See 'Medical Centre'.
OFSTED (Office for Standard in Education)	The inspectorate for children and learners in England; contributes to the provision of better education through inspections and regulations.
Old Gym	Gym next to Admissions office.
Open House	Informational evenings for parents held by each division (Lower School, Middle School, High School) at start of each school year.
Orientation Day	Important informational day(s) right before school starts in August; class lists are posted, students meet, get schedules and find classrooms.

Performing Arts Centre (PAC)	Houses our theatre, music rooms, Middle and High School drama studios and music practice rooms, as well as high school world language classrooms. The PAC office is located in the bridge between the Middle School and Dining Hall.
Party for the Planet (PFTP)	A fundraising day for the whole family in May with an environmentally-friendly focus. PSO sponsors this event with games, food and entertainment with all proceeds donated to charity.
Pod	Hallway area shared by all HR classes in a Lower School grade.
Policies	School policies are on the ACS website and the ACS Intranet.
Pre-K	Pre-Kindergarten, 4-5 year old students.
Principal	Head of Early Childhood, Lower School, Middle School or High School.
Prom	Formal High School dance, held in spring for students in Grades 11 and 12.
PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test)	Test taken by all High School Grade 10 and 11 students in October.
Parent School Organisation (PSO)	All parents and staff at ACS Cobham are automatically members of this group. The PSO Board leads the PSO.
PSO Board	The elected leadership of the PSO who organise activities and events to support students, parents and staff as well as communicate with the school staff about parent ideas and concerns.
Recess	Free play time for students before/ after lunch. May also mean school holiday break.

Red Slip	Middle School students receive red slips for behavioural issues such as repeated tardiness, violations of school rules or disrespect to others.
Report Card	Quarterly school reports for each student's progress.
Resource (now Learning Support)	Individual/small group learning support provided for students needing extra help with literacy, maths or English language.
Room Parent/Coordinator	See 'Homeroom Coordinator'.
Rugby field/pitch	The large grass playing field next to old gym parking lot and in front of the dorm.
SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test)	US test taken for university/college admissions by grade 11 and 12 students; may be taken more than once.
School Colours	Green and navy blue.
Scramblers	In Early Childhood, 3 year old students.
Security Hut	The small hut at main school entrance with 24-hour security staff.
Security Hut Parking Lot	See 'Main Parking Lot'.
Senior	A Grade 12 student.
Sophomore	A Grade 10 student.
Specials/Special Area Classes	Other than core subject classes; specialist teacher classes in art, music, computers, etc.
Special Purpose Committee	A committee/person who coordinates a single school event such as Career Day, PFTP, etc; part of the PSO.
Spirit Club	PSO parent volunteer support group for all school sports teams.

Student Study Team/Student High Support Team (SST)	In Lower School, Middle School and School the SST groups meet regularly to review and decide on actions to support students' individual academic, social or emotional needs.
Student Council	Students elected by their peers in Middle School and High School to form a council that organises parties, dances and charity events. A teacher advises each council.
Summer picnics	Picnics for new and returning families during July and August that are organised by the PSO Welcome Team.
Summer reading list	In Middle School, students are required to read one book over the summer and are given a suggested reading list. In High School, it is a compulsory course requirement that students read relevant books and complete assigned tasks.
Sunshine Hospitality	PSO committee person who sends cards and gifts to members of school community in case of illness, death, new baby, etc.
Tarmac area	The area next to the T-block and Admissions, before you get to the fountain area (covered with black 'tarmac', looks like asphalt).
T-block	The white building forming a 'U' next to Admissions.
Track	The running track with grass in the middle at the end of the rugby field and near the tennis courts. Parents can run/walk on it, as long as they don't disturb the students; sometimes PE classes use it.
Trunk-or-Treat	PSO-sponsored Halloween fun event for the whole family. Kids 'trick-or-treat' from 'trunk' (car boot) to 'trunk' in school parking lot.

Try-outs, Sports/Drama	Scheduled right after school on designated days before seasonal sports teams begin or dramatic performance rehearsals. Students demonstrate their skills to earn a place on team/performance.
Varsity (V)	Our highest-level competing sports team.
Welcome Coffee	Informational social event for new parents; one in August and one in January sponsored by the PSO; a great opportunity to meet other parents.
Welcome Team	PSO parent volunteer group whose main purpose is to ease the transition of new families starting at the school.
Yearbook	End-of-year books produced by Lower School, Middle School and High School with photos of all students and their activities during the school year. Each student receives a book and are encouraged to have other students sign or write encouraging messages in their own.

COMMUNITY



Adult education

Check with your council for local options or you can try:

Surrey County Council
www.surreycc.gov.uk/adultlearning
0300 200 1044

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead County Council
https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/

The National Careers Service
www.direct.gov.uk/NationalCareersService

The Open University
www.open.ac.uk

Area councils

The local District Council Office is equivalent in the US to a 'Town Hall,' and takes care of community services such as rubbish and recycling, building permission, parking permits and schools. The Council is a good source of information for local children's clubs and playgroups. You can find your local council by entering your postcode or street and town at:

www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council

Citizens Advice Bureau

The Citizens Advice Bureau helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free information and advice. Visit their website for answers to your questions or to find your local office:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Household donations

Most town High Streets have charity shops that will take used donations of clothing, shoes, books, games and housewares. Larger items and small electrical items can be taken to your local council operated recycling and refuse centre. You can find this address and opening times online on your local council website. The following charities also have more information on their websites:

British Heart Foundation
www.bhf.org.uk

Cancer Research UK
www.cancerresearchuk.org

Oxfam
www.oxfam.org.uk

Princess Alice Hospice
www.pah.org.uk

To find charity shops in your area:
www.charityretail.org.uk

Language schools

Many of the Adult Learning sites also offer language classes for adults so look at that section of this book as well. The local public libraries will also have information about language classes.

Berlitz
www.berlitz.com

Search for classes in your area.

Legal issues

CHILDREN AND THE LAW

- **Driving**
  Young drivers must be seventeen years old. Make sure you have car insurance even for learner drivers.

- **Alcohol**
  There are strict laws governing alcohol consumption in the UK and you should check that you are not breaking the law by allowing your child to drink. At age 16, your child can buy or be bought beer or cider

to drink with a meal, but not in a bar; only in an area specifically set aside for meals.

Except for 16 and 17 year-olds having a meal in a pub, it is against the law for anyone under 18 to buy alcohol in a pub, off-licence, supermarket or other retail outlet, or for anyone to buy alcohol for someone under 18 to consume in a pub or public place.

Most pubs serving meals will welcome children but some pubs do not and have signs: Strictly 18 and over only.

For more on drinking rules, go to www.direct.gov.uk in the Parents section (Your Child's Health).

- **National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)**
  The NSPCC has excellent information on leaving children home alone and understanding the law on this and children's safety. The NSPCC operates the Child Protection Hotline which offers counselling and advice: www.nspcc.org.uk

- **Leaving Children Alone at Home**
  There is no legal age limit for leaving children at home alone, but it is an offence to do so if it places them at risk. The NSPCC suggests that children under the age of 12 are not mature enough to be at home alone and children under age 16 should not be left alone overnight.

  Parents are also legally responsible for any criminal act done by a child under the age of 16.

- **Babysitting Age**
  There is no legal age for babysitting. However, endangering a child by leaving them unattended is a criminal offence. The use of common sense is advised.

Notary public

The American Embassy offers notary services as well (https://uk.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/london/).

Libraries

To find your local library, enter your postcode at:
www.gov.uk/local-library-services

To obtain a library card, you must present something with your current address – usually a utility bill is easiest. Once you have your library card, you can borrow from any of the county libraries. The library is also a great source for finding information on your local area, courses, volunteer opportunities, and free Internet for a limited amount of time. Some libraries offer story times for young children.

Places of worship

Find by entering 'places of worship' or more specific information with your postcode at:

www.yell.com
www.findachurch.co.uk

Post Offices

Post Offices: www.postoffice.co.uk
Royal Mail: www.royalmail.com
Helpline: 0345 774 0740

The Royal Mail collects, sorts, delivers and transports the mail. The Post Offices provide access to the Royal Mail's services and also provides other functions (see below). You can search for addresses, postage prices, postcodes, and more on both sites.

To find the nearest Post Office, enter your postcode:
www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder

Post Offices are located in the newsagents on the high streets in most towns. Generally, they are open 09:00-17:30 Monday-Friday (some close at 13:00 on Wednesdays so check your branch), and 09:00-12:00 on Saturdays.

At the Post Office you can:
- Buy postage stamps and send packages.
- Pay household utility bills.

- Pick up application forms to change car registration to UK.
- Pick up application to obtain or transfer your driving licence.
- Exchange common foreign currencies. They don't charge a commission, but the rate may be a bit high. They usually have $USD and Euros on hand and can order other currencies.

MAIL BOXES ETC.
www.mbe.co.uk/

Can be costly, but they can pack and ship items for you. They also offer express mail services.

Women's Clubs and Other Organisations

You may never have belonged to a club in your life and not think of yourself as a 'joiner.' However, contacting one of these organisations when you arrive in the UK may make your adjustment smoother and easier. Membership in the North American clubs is generally open to women holding a North American passport, women married to holders of North American passports, or those who can show strong American connections, such as children attending an American or international school.

A useful publication for expats in the UK is The American: The Transatlantic Magazine (www.theamerican.co.uk). The American is a monthly magazine for the American community in the UK and others who are interested in American culture. It has articles relevant to expats in the UK as well as listings of many clubs and organisations.

Some of the clubs in the London area:

AMERICAN WOMEN OF SURREY
www.awsurrey.org

Primarily American members, but also has members from Germany, Holland, Japan, Canada, and right here from England. Men are also welcome. The group welcomes and assists new families to the area and supports philanthropic projects both locally and overseas. This is an extremely active group with over 30 clubs and activities – there's something for everyone! AWS has a hidden Facebook group called 'ExPats of Surrey' that you must request to join, and you will only be added if your Facebook profile includes something to indicate you are local to the area.

AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUB OF BERKSHIRE AND SURREY
www.awbs.org.uk

The AWBS International Women's Club is a not-for-profit, non-partisan club that provides a welcome to individuals living in England. The club represents over 29 nationalities with the purpose of welcoming and assisting all newcomers and their families through the relocation process, to promoting friendship and interaction among members and to further their knowledge and understanding of England. This organisation (AWBS) is open to all ACS families. It offers numerous social, cultural, and charitable activities each month and is a great way to get involved. The "Common Ground" magazine is published annually and lists all activities.

AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUB OF LONDON
www.awclondon.org

The American Women's Club of London (AWC) is a non-profit and volunteer-run organisation dedicated to providing a welcoming environment for American women (and non-citizens with close ties to the US) residing in the UK. The AWC is non- partisan and does not endorse any political or religious group or position.

AUSTRIAN CLUB LONDON
www.austrianclublondon.com

Established in 1984, in association with the Austrian Ambassador in London, to maintain and upkeep the "Austrian Spirit" amongst the Austrian expatriates in London and UK nationals with a strong bond to Austria. They offer events, networking, and outings for all to enjoy and learn the Austrian way.

BRITISH-GERMAN ASSOCIATION
www.britishgermanassociation.org

Founded in 1949 to promote Anglo-German friendship. Membership is open to anyone who enjoys German culture and is appreciative of a strong British-German relationship. Members can enjoy social gatherings, cultural events, guest speakers, and more (in London).

CANADIAN WOMEN'S CLUB
www.canadianwomenlondon.org

Calling all permanent and temporary Canadian expats! Enjoy a wide variety of events and activities, participate in charitable projects, and best of all, meet other Canadians in the area.

CHILTERN AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUB (CAWC)
www.cawc.co.uk

This is a group whose primary objective is to welcome and assist newcomers and their families in England.

ST. JOHN'S WOOD WOMEN'S CLUB
sjwwc.org

The St. John's Wood Women's Club (SJWWC) is an activities-based social and civic non-profit organisation promoting friendship through activities and social events. It welcomes citizens of all nationalities and are dedicated to enhancing the "London Experience" for members and their families. Most members live in the northern section of London.

THE THAMES VALLEY AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUB
www.tvawc.com

TVAWC is similar to AWBS, but smaller.

For the complete listing of 32 clubs, check the Federation of International Women's Associations in London (www.fiwal.org.uk/about-fiwal). The list includes associations for Arab, Australian, Chilean, Turkish and New Zealand women. There is also the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas (www.fawco.org).

DAILY LIFE



Setting up a house in the UK

If you have moved from a very different climate, or one where household heating systems are not consistent with what is most common in the UK, you may find the following household items helpful. Most can be ordered from amazon.co.uk or found locally at DIY stores, such as Homebase, garden centres or at your local ironmonger:

- Radiator trays for setting on your radiator filled with water to increase humidity levels in the house.
- A radiator brush for cleaning in and behind radiators.
- Shoe/boot mud scrapers for outside entry door to your house.
- Wellington boots.
- A water pitcher with filter (Brita) is recommended for drinking water.
- Moisture absorbing rugs to put near doors leading outside.

Electricity/light bulbs/plugs

- The electricity voltage in the UK is 240V.
- Two types of light bulbs are sold in the UK (screw bottom and bayonet bottom). Be sure to double-check the type of light bulb you need before you head to the store.
- If you are coming from another European country, you will need to have adaptors for your electrical items. The plugs have three prongs in the UK.
- If you are coming from North America and bringing 110V appliances with you, try to buy a step up/step down transformer in North America as they are much cheaper and more readily available.
- There is an old but great post on an expat site that can fill you in on the transferability of all sorts of electronics from all over the world: www.talk.uk-yankee.com/index.php?topic=12567.0

Household appliances

Please note that people who are moving are often willing to sell their household appliances and other items for reasonable prices. Check the AWBS website for listings. People who are moving on sometimes will also sell their household appliances on local Surrey Facebook groups such as Ex-Pats of Surrey. Please take sensible safety precautions if going down this route.

In the UK, most of the outlets will have a fuse in them. If your appliance stops working, first try changing the fuse in the outlet and see if it works.

Dryers are often condensing dryers, meaning you will have to empty the water tray as well as the filter trap.

Hard water

The water in this area is quite hard.

You will need to add dishwasher salt to your dishwasher, unless you use the 3-in-1 dishwasher tablets, which include detergent, salt, and a rinse aid. This salt is available at the grocery store and will be in the aisle with the cleaning supplies.

- Certain appliances build up limescale and will need to be de-scaled on occasion to work effectively. You can buy de-scaling packets at the grocery store in the aisle with the cleaning supplies.
- Many homes now have water softeners. Please ask you landlord/realtor for guidance on proper tablets or salt blocks required by the machine. Most local hardware stores will stock and deliver salt specifically made for water softeners.

Discount/Vouchers

www.discountvouchers.co.uk
www.groupon.co.uk
www.moneysavingexpert.com
www.vouchercodes.co.uk

Discount vouchers (or coupons) can be printed from the website or emailed to you. Many chain restaurants have 2 for 1 deals. They also have promotional codes for online shopping sites, but you are required to provide them with your email address.

www.opentable.co.uk
This website is great for reservations at restaurants in London. It also has good deals going at many well-known and independent restaurants (see left-hand panel on home page).

www.lastminute.com
A useful site for finding discounted theatre tickets and hotels everywhere.

Passes/savings

ENGLISH HERITAGE MEMBERSHIP
www.english-heritage.org.uk

With an annual or lifetime membership, exploring more than 400 castles, historic homes, and ruins will be free. These include famous sites such as Dover Castle, the Battle of Hastings Abbey and Battlefield, and London's Chiswick House and Gardens. Membership options and discount information is available on the English Heritage website. If you have visitors coming, you might want to consider the English Heritage Overseas Visitor Pass. For £20, this pass allows free entry to over 100 historic attractions. The pass is available for a period of one or two weeks.

HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES PASS
www.hrp.org.uk

Hundreds of years of royal history are waiting to be explored at Tower of London, Kew Palace, Hampton Court Palace, Banqueting House, and Kensington Palace. With a Historic Royal Palaces Pass you can gain entry to these five famous English palaces as well as get into exclusive events such as rooftop tours of Hampton Court Palace and the Ceremony of the Keys at Tower of London. More importantly, your membership helps provide the funds needed to maintain some of England's most treasured history.

LEGOLAND ANNUAL PASS
www.legoland.co.uk

If you like the idea of an annual pass to Legoland, but don't want to invest in the Merlin Pass, you are in luck. Legoland offers three different entry passes, the basic annual pass, full annual pass, and lifetime pass. Discounts at the amusement park's restaurants and shops are also part of the deal, as well as free entry to popular park events such as Amazing Machines, Legoland Live, and fireworks shows.

MERLIN ANNUAL PASS
www.merlinannualpass.co.uk

This yearly pass buys entry to many top UK attractions including: Thorpe Park, Legoland, the London Eye, London Aquarium, and Warwick Castle. Many of these attractions are popular day outings with children. Make sure to read all the important membership details on the Merlin Annual Pass website for information pertaining to discounts on food and drink at participating area restaurants.

NATIONAL TRUST MEMBERSHIP
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

The National Trust offers an annual or lifetime membership, which includes free entry and parking at more than 300 historic houses and gardens. Some of the more notable venues include Bodiam Castle, Stonehenge, and the Beatrix Potter Gallery. Check out the various membership options and even join the National Trust online. Children under five go free to all properties. There is also a handy, free iPhone app that, once loaded, can be used to locate any National Trust place in your area.

STUDENT ID CARDS
www.16-25railcard.co.uk/

This Student ID cards allows students to get discounts on the trains and at theatres. They are also useful for travel abroad to get student prices at some museums and sites.

WINDSOR GREAT PARK
www.windsorgreatpark.co.uk

If you enjoy walking, running, biking, or spending a day at the park feeding the ducks, Windsor Great Park is the place to be. This thousand acre expanse of gardens, lakes and woodlands is located just a few steps from ACS Egham. There are several membership options, with one offering a discount at the Savill Garden Gift Shop. The annual Car Park Pass can also be very valuable if you frequent these parks. This card allows free parking at the following car parks: The Savill Garden, Wick Road, Virginia Water, and Blacknest car park.

WINDSOR CASTLE
www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/windsorcastle

Remember to get your Windsor Castle ticket stamped before leaving the castle. This allows free returns for twelve months when you show the original ticket and identification.

Tipping/gratuity

Knowing when to tip and how much can be just as confusing and awkward here in the UK as it is in many places overseas. Nowhere is it mandatory or expected that you leave a tip. Some guidelines are:

- **Restaurants:** It is customary to leave 10–15% for extra good service. Many places will add the gratuity on automatically to the bill. Read the fine print in the menu or on your bill when you get it. (You are not required to pay this and can even ask that it be removed). You aren't expected to tip in a pub when you are ordering and paying for your drinks at the bar. If you get exceptional service from your barman you can leave the equivalent cost of a half pint.
- **Hairdressers:** Not required, but if you wish to, you can either add on a few pounds or opt for 10% of the services rendered.
- **Post Delivery Person, Rubbish Collector:** It is not the custom to tip even at Christmas time.
- **Taxi Drivers:** Typically 10% of the fare.

If you happen to head over to France, a 15% tip is usually included in your bill at a restaurant. In Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland you can add 5% to your bill total, but rarely up to 10%. You can always search for tipping information on the specific country you are visiting online.

Family days out

Be sure to visit www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk. You can search by location to find all sorts of things to do with the kids, be it near your house or for when you plan a trip to another town or city. You can also find other websites when you enter "places to visit surrey" into an online search engine, some of which offer discounted tickets, etc... Of course, London is full of places to go and things to do, too numerous to list here.

THEME PARKS & LEISURE CENTRES

Chessington World of Adventures
Thorpe Park
Legoland
Coral Reef (Waterslides and fun water activities)
Big Apple Woking (Bowling)
Jake's Indoor Play World
Guildford Spectrum (Ice Skating, Bowling, Swimming)
Bracknell Ski Slope & Ice Rink

CASTLES & MUSEUMS

Hever Castle (Hever)
Leeds Castle (Kent near Maidstone)
Dover Castle (Dover, Kent)
Hampton Court Palace (Richmond)
The Museum of Army Flying (Stockbridge near Salisbury)
Warwick Castle (Warwickshire)
Brooklands Transportation Museum (Weybridge)
Windsor Castle (Windsor)
The Lightbox Art Gallery and Museum (Woking)

ANIMALS & NATURE

Look Out Discovery Centre (Bracknell)
Go Ape (Bracknell)
Savill Gardens/Virginia Water Park
Bocketts Farm Park (Fetcham near Leatherhead)
Kew Gardens (Richmond)
Odds Farm (High Wycombe)
Hobbledown (Epsom)

WEEKEND TRIP IDEAS

Accessible by car, Southwest Trains, Eurostar, Eurotunnel, and/or ferry:
Bath
Brighton, Portsmouth, West Wittering, other beaches
Cambridge, Cotswolds, Devon, Cornwall
English Heritage Properties (various locations)
Isle of Wight
National Trust Properties (various locations)
New Forest & Beaulieu, Oxford, Stonehenge, Salisbury, Avebury, Stratford-upon-Avon, York
Scotland & Wales
Belgium: Brugge, Brussels. France: Calais, Paris

Embassies

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA

W: www.angola.org.uk
020 7299 9850

ARGENTINE EMBASSY

W: www.argentine-embassy-uk.org **E:** info@argentine-embassy-uk.org
020 7318 1300

AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION
W: www.uk.embassy.gov.au
020 7379 4334

AUSTRIAN EMBASSY
W: www.bmeia.gv.at/en/embassy/london.html **E:** london-ob@bmeia.gv.at
020 7344 3250

BELGIAN EMBASSY
W: https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en
020 7470 3700

BRAZILIAN EMBASSY
W: www.brazil.org.uk **E:** info.london@itamaraty.gov.br
020 7747 4500

CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION
W: www.canadainternational.gc.ca/united_kingdom-royaume_uni/index.aspx
020 7004 6000

COLOMBIAN EMBASSY
W: londres.consulado.gov.co **E:** elondres@cancilleria.gov.co
020 7637 9893

EMBASSY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC
W: www.mzv.cz/london/en **E:** london@embassy.mzv.cz
020 7243 7908

EMBASSY OF DENMARK
W: storbritannien.um.dk
020 7333 0200

EMBASSY OF ECUADOR
W: https://www.cancilleria.gob.ec/londres/
020 7584 1367

EGYPTIAN EMBASSY
W: www.egyptianconsulate.co.uk **E:** info@egyptianconsulate.co.uk
020 7235 9777

FRENCH EMBASSY
W: www.ambafrance-uk.org/-English
020 7073 1200

GERMAN EMBASSY
W: www.london.diplo.de
020 7824 1300

GREEK EMBASSY
W: www.greekembassy.org.uk
020 7229 3850

HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA
W: www.hcilondon.gov.in **E:** info.london@hcilondon.in
020 8629 5950

INDONESIAN EMBASSY
W: www.indonesianembassy.org.uk
020 7499 7661

IRISH EMBASSY
W: www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/great-britain
020 7235 2171

ISRAELI EMBASSY
W: embassies.gov.il/london **E:** info@london.mfa.gov.il
020 7957 9500

ITALIAN EMBASSY
W: www.amblondra.esteri.it/Ambasciata_Londra
E: ambasciata.londra@esteri.it
020 7312 2200

JAPANESE EMBASSY
W: www.uk.emb-japan.go.jp **E:** info@ld.mofa.go.jp
020 7465 6500

HIGH COMMISSION FOR PAKISTAN
W: www.phclondon.org **E:** visa@phclondon.org
020 7664 9200

MALAYSIAN EMBASSY
W: www.jimlondon.net
020 7235 8033

MEXICAN EMBASSY
W: consulmex.sre.gob.mx/reinounido
020 7907 9442

ROYAL NETHERLANDS EMBASSY
W: www.netherlands-embassy.org.uk **E:** lon@minbuza.nl
020 7590 3200

NEW ZEALAND HIGH COMMISSION
W: https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/countries-and-regions/europe/united-kingdom/new-zealand-high-commission/ **E:** aboutnz@newzealandhc.org.uk
020 7930 8422

NIGERIA HIGH COMMISSION
W: www.nigeriahc.org.uk/
020 7839 1244

PERUVIAN EMBASSY
W: www.peruembassy-uk.com **E:** postmaster@peruembassy-uk.com
020 7235 3802

POLAND
W: https://www.gov.pl/web/unitedkingdom/embassy-london
0207 2913 520

RUSSIAN CONSULATE
W: www.rusemb.org.uk **E:** info@rusemb.org.uk
020 7243 1410

SOUTH AFRICAN HIGH COMMISSION
W: https://southafricahouse.uk
020 7451 7299

SOUTH KOREAN EMBASSY
W: gbr.mofa.go.kr/english/eu/gbr/main **E:** koreanembinuk@mofat.go.kr
020 7227 5500

SWEDISH EMBASSY
W: www.swedenabroad.com/en-GB/Embassies/London/
E: ambassaden.london@gov.se
020 7917 6400

EMBASSY OF SWITZERLAND
W: www.eda.admin.ch/london
020 7616 6000

SPAIN
W: www.exteriores.gob.es/Embajadas/LONDRES
020 7235 5555

UNITED STATES EMBASSY
W: uk.usembassy.gov
020 7499 9000

VENEZUELAN EMBASSY
W: www.embavenez-uk.org **E:** despacho.londres@mppre.gob.ve
020 7584-4206 / 020 7581-2776

Conversions

WOMEN'S CLOTHING

UK	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
USA	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
EUR	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50	52

MEN'S SHIRTS

UK/ USA	14	14.5	15	15.5	16	16.5	17	17.5	18
EUR	36	37	38	39	41	42	43	44	46

WOMEN'S SHOES

UK	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5
USA	5	5.5	6	6.5	7	7.5
EUR	35	35.5	36	37	37.5	38
UK	6	6.5	7	7.5	8	
USA	8.5	9	9.5	10	10.5	
EUR	39	40	41	42	43	

CHILDREN'S SHOES

UK	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	1	2	3
US	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	1	2	3	4
EUR	23	24	25	27	28	29	31	32	33	34	35

Please note that these charts are only guidelines and can vary depending on brand and source.

WEIGHT AND MEASUREMENT

Length

UK/ USA	1 inch	1 foot	1 yard	1 mile	.333 in.	39.37 in.	3.28 ft.	.62 mile
Metric	2.5 cm	30 cm	0.9 cm	1.6 km	1 cm	1 m	1 m	1 km

To convert:	Multiply by
Inches to millimetres	25.4
Feet to metres	0.3048
Yards to metres	0.9144
Miles to kilometres	1.6093

Weight	American	British
One cup	8 oz.	10 oz.
One pint	16 oz.	20 oz.
One tablespoon	½ oz.	1 oz.

Weight	US (Standard UK)	Imperial	Metric
Flour	¼ cup	1 oz.	25g
	½ cup	2 oz.	50g
	¾ cup	3 oz.	75g
	1 cup	4 oz.	100g
Icing sugar/cocoa/cornflour	1 cup	4½ oz.	120g

Weight	US	Imperial	Metric
Butter/Sugar (castor, granulated or brown, firmly packed)	2 Tbsp.	1 oz.	25g
	¼ cup	2 oz.	50g
	½ cup	4 oz.	100g
	¾ cup	6 oz.	175g
	1 cup		225g
Liquids/Cream/Yogurt	¼ cup	2 fl. oz.	50 ml
	½ cup	4 fl. oz.	100 ml
	¾ cup	6 fl. oz.	185 ml
	1 cup	8 fl. oz.	250 ml
	1 pint (2 cups)	16 fl. oz.	475 ml
Grated Cheese/Chopped Nuts	1 cup	4 oz.	100 g
Yeast	1 cake	½ oz. fresh	15 g

TEMPERATURE

Fahrenheit	32	41	50	59	68	77	86	95	104	140
Celsius	0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	60

Boiling point of water =	100° Celsius,	212° Fahrenheit
Freezing point of water =	0° Celsius,	32° Fahrenheit

To Convert:	
Celsius to Fahrenheit:	multiply by 9, divide by 5 and add 32 Fahrenheit
Fahrenheit to Celsius:	subtract 32, multiply by 5 and divide by 9

Cooking Temperatures	Celsius	Fahrenheit
Gas mark 1	140	275-300
Gas mark 2	150	300
Gas mark 3	160	325
Gas mark 4	180	350
Gas mark 5	190	375
Gas mark 6	200	400
Gas mark 7	220	425
Gas mark 8	230	450
Gas mark 9	260	500

All temperatures are the approximate equivalent.

BODY TEMPERATURE

Normal body temperature is 98.6 Fahrenheit, which equals 37 Celsius.

American to British translation

CLOTHES

American English	British English
Pants	Trousers
Underpants	Pants, or knickers for women, Y-fronts, or boxers for men
Sweater	Jumper/Pullover
Vest	Waistcoat
Men's undershirt	Vest
Raincoat	Mackintosh/Mac
Umbrella	Brolly (or umbrella)
Business suit	Lounge suit
Backpack/napsack	Rucksack
Wallet	Purse
Purse	Handbag
Sneakers/gym shoes	Trainers/plimsoles
Rain boots	Wellies
Cleats	Boots

EVERYDAY PHRASES/SLANG

American English	British English
One UK pound (£)	A quid (slang)
Vacuuming	Hoovering
Sports clothes and accessories	Sports kit
One of a kind	One off
Tired/wiped out	Knackered
Whine	Whinge
Fanny Pack	Bum Bag

FOODS

American English	British English
Eggplant	Aubergine
Zucchini	Courgette
Squash	Marrow
Peanut oil	Groundnut oil
Ham	Gammon
Baking soda	Bicarbonate of soda
Corn starch	Corn flour
Corn meal	Polenta
All purpose flour	Plain flour
Bread flour	Strong flour
Superfine sugar	Caster sugar
Cilantro	Coriander
Powdered sugar/10X	Icing sugar
Molasses	Black treacle
Candy	Sweets or Sweeties
Cupcakes	Fairy cakes
Pie shell	Pastry case
Potato chips	Crisps
French fries	Chips or fries
Cookies	Biscuits
Rolls (soft)	Baps
Popsicle	Ice lolly
Dessert	Pudding (general term for dessert)

Slice of bacon	Rasher of streaky bacon
Plastic wrap	Cling film
Wax paper	Grease proof paper
Garbage bag	Bin liner
Roast (of meat)	Joint (of meat)
Dish-washing soap	Washing-up liquid
Hamburger/Ground beef	Beef mince
Baked potato	Jacket potato
Jello	Jelly

HOUSEHOLD

American English	British English
First floor	Ground floor (entry level)
Second floor	First floor (one level up from ground)
Apartment	Flat
Elevator	Lift
Cooktop (just the burners)	Hob or stove
Faucets	Taps
Living room	Lounge or sitting room, a drawing room is a posh sitting room
Real estate agent	Estate agent
Furnace	Boiler
Back yard	Garden
Trash can	Rubbish bin
Dumpster	Skip
Unlisted number	Ex-directory
Garbage	Rubbish
Jungle Gym	Climbing Frame
Rubbing Alcohol	Surgical Spirits

DRIVING/VEHICLES/TRANSPORTATION

American English	British English
Trunk of car	Boot
Hood of car	Bonnet
Highway (like an Interstate)	Motorway (M1, M2)
The Main Street	High Street
Divided highway	Dual carriageway
Traffic jam	Tailback
Yield	Give way
To pass (a car)	To overtake
License Plate number	Registration number
Sidewalk	Pavement
Shoulder (of road)	Verge (on motorway – hard shoulder)
Parking lot	Car park (multi-story, if it's on levels)
Semi (truck)	Lorry
Station wagon	Estate car
Sedan	Saloon
Trailer/camper	Caravan
Gasoline	Petrol
Subway	Underground/tube

BANKING/SHOPPING/GOING TO THE DOCTOR

American English	British English
Shopping bag (plastic)	Carrier bag
Grocery cart	Trolley
Liquor store	Off-licence
Hardware Store	Ironmonger
Cashier	Till
ATM	Cashpoint

Gift certificate	Gift voucher
Checking account	Current account
Savings account	Deposit account
Deposit slip	Paying in slip
Family doctor	General practitioner (GP)
Doctor's office	Doctor's surgery
Emergency Room	Accident and Emergency Dept (A&E), Casualty
Pharmacy	Chemist
Band Aid	Plaster
Specialist Doctor	Their title is 'Mr' not Doctor

GENERAL

American English	British English
Flashlight	Torch
(Power) outlet	Mains socket
Cellular phone	Mobile
First name	Christian name
Last name	Surname or Family name
Line of people	Queue
Mail box	Post box/letter box
The line is busy	The line is engaged
Collect call	Reversed charge call
Vacation	Holiday
One way/Round Trip	Single/Return
Restroom/Bathroom	Toilet/Loo/Lavatory
Intermission	Interval
Soccer	Football (also called 'footie')
Football	American football

Counterclockwise	Anti-clockwise
Custom made	Bespoke
Wrench	Spanner
Do the dishes	Do the washing up
Eraser	Rubber

Reading list:

A Moveable Marriage by Robin Pascoe

American Cooking in England by Delora Jones

British Hotels Inns and Other Places by Alastair Sawday

Brit-Think Ameri-Think by Jane Walmsley

Notes from a Small Island by Bill Bryson

Raising Global Nomads by Robin Pascoe

The Good Pub Guide – a must-have for pub goers
www.thegoodpubguide.co.uk

Third Culture Kids by David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken

Watching the English by Kate Fox

Websites

www.americaninbritain.co.uk
www.expatwoman.com
www.austrianclublondon.com
www.britishgermanassociation.org
www.canuckabroad.com
www.deutsche-in-london.net
www.visitengland.com
www.expatfocus.com
www.german-ymca.org.uk
www.expatexchange.com



HEALTHCARE

FOR ANY EMERGENCY DIAL 999 (POLICE, FIRE, AMBULANCE)
FOR MEDICAL ADVICE (NON-EMERGENCY) DIAL 111

National Health Service (NHS)

WWW.NHS.UK
The United Kingdom has a government subsidised National Health Service (NHS). As a resident of the UK, you are entitled to use its services, which are provided to you at little or no additional cost. These services include doctor care, dentistry, specialist and hospital care, childcare clinics for children less than five years of age, eye care and family planning as well as subsidised prescription fees.

The first thing to do is register with a doctor (local surgery) in your area. This will involve filling out forms and providing some form of ID (i.e. passport). You are free to register with any doctor, provided that you live in their area and the practice's quota of patients is not already full. Visit www.nhs.uk and put in your postal code for a list of providers in your area. If you are not able to find a practice near you with openings, contact your local Primary Care Trust for assistance. For Surrey phone 01372 201700. For Berkshire phone 01344 415600.

Once you've registered with a local doctor, you are free to see him/her. If you need to see a specialist, your GP will likely need to provide a referral.

EMERGENCY AND URGENT CARE SERVICE STEPS:
1. CALL 999: For immediate and urgent care (stated above).

2. CALL 111:
   a. for fast non-emergency medical help.
   b. if you think you need A & E or need another NHS urgent care service.
   c. if you don't know who to call or you don't have GP to call.
   d. if you need health information or reassurance about what to do next.

3. CALL your GP or Local Pharmacy.

HELPFUL WEBSITES:

NHS Website: www.nhs.uk
(general info about NHS services, nearest surgery).

NHS Direct Website: www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/nhs-111/
(health, medical related info).

NHS DIRECT HOTLINE: 111
NHS Direct operates a 24-hour nurse advice and health information service, providing confidential information on:

- What to do if you or your family is feeling ill.
- Particular health conditions.
- Local doctors, dentists or late-night opening pharmacies.
- Self help and support organisations.
- Translation, if necessary.

Helpful terminology

Emergency Room	A&E (Accident & Emergency) or Casualty
Doctor's Office	Surgery
Specialist	Consultant, referred to as Mr./Mrs. Ms., not Dr.
Pharmacy	Chemist
Physical Therapy	Physio (Physiotherapy)

Private health care

- Private health care is also an option in the UK and private insurance is often an employee benefit. It can also be purchased individually. Check: www.privatehealth.co.uk. No emergency care is available at private hospitals.
- It is more costly, but allows you to have control over when and where treatment should take place and who should provide the service. You also avoid potential waiting lists for non-emergency care.
- Sometimes a specialist consultant treatment is only covered if referred by a GP, so make sure to check your policy.
- For information about both NHS and private health care: www.patient.co.uk
- PLEASE NOTE: You do not have to choose a system but can use both depending on your needs.
- If you have private health insurance, check your policy as sometimes travel insurance is included.
- It is very simple to set up private travel insurance for reasonable cost, either via the private health insurers, the airlines (BA offers a yearly plan) or some booking websites such as Expedia offer insurance either on a trip by trip basis or yearly.
- As a UK resident there are two types of health cover available when travelling to Europe. You can apply for either:
  - A UK Global Health Insurance card (UK GHIC), or
  - A UK European Health Insurance card (UK EHIC), if you have rights under the Withdrawal Agreement.

  For most people, the UK Global Health Insurance card (UK GHIC) replaces existing European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

  For more information about the UK withdrawal agreement please visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/withdrawal-agreement-explainer-for-part-2-citizens-rights

Hospitals

To find the nearest hospital:
www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Hospital/LocationSearch/8/Hospitals

Programme it into Favourites on your Sat Nav (satellite navigation) so you can find it when you are stressed and in a hurry!

Paediatricians

In the UK, most children see the GP for all routine visits and illnesses. Paediatricians are considered specialists.

DoctorNow
www.doctornow.org
01494 706888

24-hour private health service that can be used in case of emergency.

Doctorcall of Harley Street
www.doctorcall.co.uk/visiting-doctor-services/private-gp-home-visit
0844 257 0345

Doctorcall of Harley Street can arrange for a private doctor to come to your home, hotel or place of work at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You do not need to register as a patient of Doctorcall to use their services – simply call them on 0844 257 0345 and an experienced private doctor will visit you at your home, anywhere within the London M25, in around an hour and a half. Alternatively you can have a telephone consultation with a doctor first. A free follow up call is available 24 hours after the GP's visit.

Doctors

Go to www.nhs.uk to search by postcode for local surgery/doctor listings.

Dentists

Go to www.nhs.uk to search by postcode for local dentist listings. It is not easy to find NHS dentists, and most have long waiting lists to join their practice. There are many private dentists in the area.

Additional resources:
https://bda.org/findapractice
www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/Pages/Dentalcosts.aspx

National Health Dentistry is free if when the treatment starts the patient is:

- under age 18.
- a full-time student under age 19.
- a woman who is pregnant or has had a baby in the last 12 months.
- staying in an NHS hospital and treatment is carried out by the hospital dentist.
- an NHS hospital dental service outpatient (may have to pay for dentures or bridges).

NOTE: When you make a dentist appointment for a child, they do not automatically clean the teeth. You will have to specifically request an appointment with a hygienist to have your child's teeth cleaned and you will have to pay for this service. Also note that there is no fluoride in the water locally.

Opticians

Go to www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Opticians/LocationSearch/9 to search by postcode.

Boots
www.bootsopticians.co.uk
0345 125 3752

Specsavers
www.specsavers.co.uk

Orthodontists

Search: www.nhs.uk/conditions/Orthodontics

Pharmacies/chemists

You may want to consider bringing over-the-counter medicines that you are familiar with from your home country (eg Tylenol, Advil, children's medicines etc).

Ibuprofen – Nurofen, Cuprofen, or Brufen

Tylenol/acetaminophen – Paracetamol, Panadol, Disprol, Tixymol, Calpol (Tixymol and Calpol are for children and come in liquid form)

NOTE: Although all of these medicines are available over the counter (OTC), you may have to ask your pharmacist for it. As always, read all labels.

To find a chemist/pharmacist:
www.nhs.uk/service-search

Boots
www.boots.com

Boots sells a wide range of medicines, health and beauty products, suncare, baby products and cosmetics. They also provide services such as travel vaccinations, flu jabs, opticians and repeat prescriptions.

Lloyds
www.lloydspharmacy.com

Lloyds provide a similar range of goods and services to Boots.

Travel clinics

MASTA (British Airways Preferred Partner)
www.masta-travel-health.com (for clinic nearest you)

Appointments highly recommended.

NOTE: You should visit a travel clinic 6-8 weeks before your departure.
Local GP doctors surgeries also provide travel clinic services.

Global Health Travel Clinic
www.globalhealthtravelclinic.co.uk/

Global Health has premises in West Byfleet and Guildford.
Book appointments online.

Walk-in clinics

Go to www.nhs.uk to search by postcode for local walk-in centre listings.

HOUSING/UTILITIES



Renting/buying – finding housing

The Housing Office will be pleased to help you in finding a home within the area served by the school's daily door-to-door school bus.

ACS COBHAM HOUSING OFFICER
Phone: 01932 869750
Email: cobhamhousing@acs-schools.com

There is no multiple listing service in the UK as there is in some other countries, so when you are looking for a house you will have to contact the local estate agents for availability and pricing. There are a few websites that list available houses from several estate agents:

www.primelocation.com
www.rightmove.co.uk
www.zoopla.com

Finding estate/letting agents

In the UK, the estate or letting agent works for (is commissioned by) the landlord or property owner. Be aware that the agent is not necessarily working for your best interest as a buyer or tenant. You can find reputable and professional agents from the professional organisations listed below.

The National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA) is a professional organisation for estate agents in the UK. Check their website for listings of local estate agents for buying property: www.naea.co.uk; 01926 496800

The Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA) is a professional organisation for letting agents to rent property in the UK. Check their website for listings of local letting agents: www.arla.co.uk; 01926 496800

If you are renting in the UK, you will need to get permission from the landlord to change utility providers. The landlord may also require that you change it back when you move out, so make sure to confirm this before changing providers for electric, gas, phone or water.

Area Councils

The local District Council Office is equivalent to the Town Hall, and takes care of community services such as rubbish and recycling, building permission, parking permits and schools. The Council is a good source of information for local children's clubs and playgroups.

You can find your local council by entering your postcode or street and town at: www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council

Council Tax

Your local government levies council tax against your residence for public services. Even if you are renting (from a private landlord), you are responsible for paying this tax.

Electricity

The standard electrical voltage in the UK is 240V and 50Hz. Understanding what is necessary to make your appliances work will facilitate your decision-making. Check to see which of your appliances come with a dual-voltage option (computers, battery chargers, etc.).

Check with a qualified electrician if you have any questions.

- Adapters: An adapter allows you to plug a foreign appliance into an outlet in Great Britain. Plug adapters are available for equipment with special 110/240 (dual-voltage) capabilities. An adapter DOES NOT change the voltage. Therefore, DO NOT use an adapter on any appliances with a motor without also using a transformer.
- Converters: A device used to increase or decrease the voltage of an electrical appliance. Converters are primarily used with personal care appliances, such as rollers and hair dryers, which have a heating element. They can be used for anything that does not have a motor and draws less than 1000 watts. Converters can be unreliable and with long use may burn out the appliance, so you may prefer to use a transformer.
- Transformers: A device used to increase or decrease the voltage and the frequency of the cycle currents of a motorised electrical appliance. It is necessary to change an appliance with 110V, 60Hz current to English use at 220/240V, 50Hz transformers are available. The size you need depends on the wattage of the appliance for which it will be used.

- Do not use the lightweight (so called 1600W) “chopper-converter” units that are widely available. They simply crop the top off the local voltage and leave a distorted waveform that can upset or destroy electronic equipment such as hi-fis and computers. Many electronic items (such as computers) now come with built-in transformers, so be sure that you need one before you buy.

Transformer Supplier:
Maplin (electronics stores)
www.maplin.co.uk 0333 400 9500

Phone services

HOME PHONE

- If you are calling on a landline to a phone number in the same exchange, you do not need to dial the exchange, just the last 6 digits.
- To place an international call, dial 00 + country code + number.
- The UK country code is 44.
- If calling the UK from overseas, dial 44 and then the rest of the number except the first ‘0.’ For example, to call ACS Cobham from overseas, dial 44 1932 869755.
- Dial 118 500 for directory enquiries as offered by BT (there is a small fee charged per minute).
- There are several telephone providers other than BT. Be careful – some companies use a very aggressive approach to convince you to change services. They may call and ask if you are interested in cheaper telephone rates and if you say yes, it could be taken as a confirmation that you want to change telephone services.
- Please note that the phone jacks in the UK may be different from the jacks in the country that you’re coming from and you may have to buy an adapter.
- To compare phone services and international calling rates try www.niftylist.co.uk

British Telecom (BT)
www.bt.com
0800 100 400

BudgetCom
www.budgetcom.co.uk
020 3414 7567

With BudgetCom you can dial an access code and get reasonable rates. The charges will be billed through your BT bill, but at the BudgetCom rates.

Talktalk
www.talktalk.co.uk
0800 049 1375

With Talktalk, you must continue to pay line rental to BT, but your international calls will be cheaper. There is no monthly service fee. You just pay for the calls you make.

Virgin Media
www.virginmedia.com
0845 454 1111

Virgin currently offers the fastest broadband in the UK, but it isn’t available in all areas yet. You can choose your own bundle (phone, broadband, TV) and pay monthly.

Vonage
www.vonage.co.uk
0800 008 6000

Vonage uses VOIP (voice over internet protocol) using your broadband connection to allow you to make and receive phone calls at favourable rates. You can create a virtual phone line in your home country for £3.99 that goes directly to your landline in the UK, which means your friends and family in your home country can call you for free.

Mobile phones

NOTE: It is illegal to use a handheld mobile phone while driving in the UK and will result in a fine and points on your licence if caught.

There are many types of phones and service plans available (O2, Vodafone, Orange, etc). You will need a bank account and a utility bill in your name before getting a monthly payment plan. Another option is a “pay as you go” phone. The following providers have retail shops:

Carphone Warehouse
www.carphonewarehouse.com
0800 049 6250

Carphone Warehouse sells many types of phones and you can sign up with the provider of your choice. It is a good place to get missing pieces for phones.

O2
www.o2.co.uk
08442 02 02 02

EE
ee.co.uk
0800 956 6000
0800 079 8586

3 Mobile
www.three.co.uk
0800 033 8009

Virgin
www.virginmedia.com
0845 454 1111

Vodafone
www.vodafone.co.uk
0333 304 0191

Plumbing and heating

Landlords are responsible for making sure that gas fittings and flues are maintained in good order, and gas appliances that they own in their residential premises, and flues, are checked for safety every 12 months. They must also keep a record of the safety checks for at least two years and issue it to existing tenants and any new tenants before they move in. Be sure to have your boilers checked annually by a Gas Safe (formerly CORGI) registered heating engineer. You can search for a registered engineer in your area at: www.gassaferegister.co.uk

Removal companies

For moving your household items, contact the British Association of Removers for local companies who are members: www.bar.co.uk
Please see inside back cover of this Guide for more information.

Rubbish/Recyling Collection

Rubbish collection is once a week at the curb or end of your driveway. You will receive a separate container for recycling (check with your local council to see what is collected. Usually it's paper, cans, glass, and plastic but other materials are also collected in some areas). The charges for rubbish collection are included in the council tax that you pay each month (see council tax section).

- No charge for disposing household waste or recyclables at recycling centres. You must use your borough's centres.
- Garden waste, engine oil, car batteries, gas cylinders, and paints, etc. must be disposed of at household waste sites.
- Your local council will correctly dispose of refrigerators, freezers, and TVs.
- Your local council will also collect large rubbish items (refrigerators, etc.) and have pest control units (wasps nests etc.) removed for a fee.
- The council has an obligation to remove rubbish from the street if you ring them.
- There are also recycling bins for glass, paper, cans, plastic and clothing in some towns. They are usually in the town's car parks.
- Search on www.recycle-more.co.uk to find recycling points close to where you live and information on allowed items.
- Check your local council website for more information pertaining to your area.

Television

All television owners require a TV Licence. You can check the current cost of a TV Licence and apply for it on online at www.tvlicensing.co.uk. Yearly renewal notices will come in the post.

All television signals are digital so if you have an older analogue television you will require a converter box to connect to an aerial. There are over fifty television channels available via Freeview in the area. If you want more channels, you can look into Sky television (satellite) or Virgin Media cable (if it is available in your area).

BT Vision
www.bt.com
0800 100 400
Enjoy the benefits of Freeview and also add on access to their in-house library of movies and television shows as well as Sky Sports.

ESPN America
www.espnamerica.com
Sky customers: 0344 2411 653
Virgin Media customers: 0345 454 1111

Shows Major League Baseball, NFL, NHL, NBA, college basketball, etc. through Sky or Virgin Media.

Sky TV (satellite)
www.sky.co.uk
0800 151 2747

The leader in the UK for digital satellite offering over 700 channels in theme packages such as Entertainment, News, Sports, and Movies.

Virgin Media
www.virginmedia.com
0845 454 1111

Virgin is the only digital cable provider in the UK offering a range of 45 to 160 channels as well as a few Sky options.

SO Computers and Satellites
www.sointegrations.co.uk
0845 680 3038

Independent satellite expert, specialising in installation and maintenance of most European, Middle East, Asian and South American satellite Channels: Hotbird/Astra/ Nile sat/Hipasat/Thorn/Turksat.

Utilities (electricity, gas, water)

Affinity Water
www.affinitywater.co.uk
Non-emergency 0345 357 2401
Emergencies 0345 357 2407

British Gas
www.britishgas.co.uk
0800 048 0202
Emergencies 0800 111 999

E.ON (Electric & Gas)
www.eonenergy.com
0345 303 3040

Scottish Power
www.scottishpower.co.uk
0800 027 0072

Southern Electric (also Gas)
www.sse.co.uk
0800 980 8476

South East Water
www.southeastwater.co.uk
0333 000 0247

Sutton and East Surrey Water
www.waterplc.com
01737 772000

Thames Water
www.thameswater.co.uk
0800 316 9800



RECREATION

Things to do

AMERICAN FOOTBALL
www.britishamericanfootball.org

AMUSEMENT PARKS

Chessington World of Adventures
www.chessington.com
Leatherhead Road, Chessington, KT9 2NE
0871 663 4477

Legoland
www.legoland.co.uk
Winkfield Road, Windsor, SL4 4AY
0871 222 2001

Thorpe Park
www.thorpepark.com
Staines Road, Chertsey, KT16 8PN
0871 663 1673

BASEBALL

Guildford Mavericks
www.guildfordmavericks.co.uk

Richmond Flames
www.richmondbaseball.co.uk

Bracknell Blazers
www.britishbaseball.org

London Mets
www.londonmets.org

Baseball Softball UK
www.britishbaseball.org

BIRTHDAY PARTIES
Most leisure centres, bowling alleys and movie theatres offer parties.

The Big Apple (Laser tag, bowling, climbing zone)
www.thebigapple.co.uk
Crown Square, Woking, Surrey GU21 6HR
01483 727 100

Cookie Crumbles (Cooking parties)
www.cookiecrumbles.co.uk
020 8876 9912

Coral Reef Waterworld (Swimming parties)
www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/coralreef
Nine Mile Ride, Bracknell, RG12 7JQ
01344 862 525

Craggy Island (Rock Climbing)
www.craggy-island.com
Unit 9, Cobbett Park, Slyfield Industrial Estate, Moorfield Road,
Guildford, Surrey GU1 1RU
0344 880 8866

Daytona Sandown (Go-Karting)
www.daytona.co.uk
Sandown Park, More Lane, Esher, Surrey KT10 8AN
03303 327870

Elmbridge Xcel Leisure Complex (Swimming and other activities)
www.elmbridgexcelleisurecomplex.co.uk
Waterside Drive, Walton-on-Thames KT12 2JG
01932 260300

Go Ape Treetop Adventure
www.goape.co.uk
Swinley Forest, Nine Mile Ride, Bracknell, RG12 7QW
08456 439 215

Must be at least 10 years old and 1.4m tall for the Go Ape adventure course with adult supervision required.

Guildford Spectrum (Ice skating, tenpin bowling, swimming and other activities)
www.guildfordspectrum.co.uk
01483 44 33 22

Hobbledown (Children's adventure and farm park in Epsom)
www.hobbledown.com
01372 848990

Planet Sport (Football, Multi-sport, Cricket, Basketball, Mini-Olympics and more)
www.planeteducation.co.uk
Unit 5, Basepoint Business Centre, Andersons Road, Southampton, SO14 5FE
02380 682408

Royal Windsor (Drama and musical theatre parties)
www.theatreroyalwindsor.co.uk
Thames Street, Windsor, SL4 1PS
01753 853 888

Surbiton Raceway (Go-Karting)
www.surbiton-raceway.co.uk
Surbiton Town Sports Club, Riverhill Estate, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7QB
0208 337 5550

BIRTHDAY PARTY SUPPLIES

Partypieces
www.partypieces.co.uk
01635 201 844
(Founders of this online party supplier are the parents of Kate Middleton, wife of Prince William).

Party Delights
www.partydelights.co.uk
Party supplies, balloons, fancy dress/costumes, etc.

As If By Magic
www.asifbymagicparty.co.uk
5 Winkfield Road, Ascot SL5 7LX
01344 885 585

The Entertainer
www.thetoyshop.com
03333 205100

Non-Stop Party Shop
www.nonstopparty.co.uk/
35 High Street, Cobham, KT11 3DP
01932 868675

BOWLING

Tenpin
www.tenpin.co.uk
0871 222 3675

Guildford Spectrum
www.guildfordspectrum.co.uk
01483 443 322

CINEMAS/MOVIE THEATRES

Everyman Cinemas
www.everymancinema.com

Odeon
www.odeon.co.uk

VUE Cinemas
www.myvue.com

CRICKET

Leatherhead Cricket Club
www.leatherheadcc.co.uk

Cobham Cricket Club
www.avorianscc.co.uk

Esher Cricket Club
www.eshercc.co.uk

Oxshott Village Sports Club
www.oxshottsports.com

DANCE CLASSES

Flipside Dance School
flipsidedance.co.uk
Lushington Dr, Cobham KT112LX
Ballet, tap, jazz, contemporary.

Kelly's Dance Studio
www.kellysdance.co.uk
12 Park Road, Hampton Wick, Kingston upon Thames KT1 4AS
020 8977 4913

Stagecoach
www.stagecoach.co.uk
Leatherhead Trinity School, Woodville Road, Leatherhead KT22 7BP

RAD (Royal Academy of Dance)
Ballet, Tap and Modern Street, Jazz, Hip Hop. All ages from two years old.

The Virginia Dodd School of Dancing
Cobham Village Hall, Lushington Drive, Cobham KT11 2LU
01483 770441

Royal Academy of Dance registered teacher. Ballet, Tap, and Modern.
All ages from two and a half years old.

FAMILY WEBSITES

All for Kids UK
www.all4kidsuk.com
01707 659383

Places to go, hotels, tours, clothes, birthday parties, etc. Search by area or activity.

Day Out with the Kids
www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk

A great site for finding things to do with the kids near your house or when you visit another city.

Let's Go with the Children
www.letsgowiththechildren.co.uk
01252 368325

You can purchase an e-book detailing activities for kids in various locations.

FENCING

Kingston Fencing Club
www.kingstonfencing.co.uk

Surrey County Fencing Union
www.scfu.homestead.com

FIELD HOCKEY

Surbiton Club
http://surbitonhc.com/
020 8398 2401

Woking Hockey Club
www.wokinghc.com
01483 472509

FOOTBALL (BOYS AND GIRLS SOCCER)

Local leisure centres and some health clubs may offer football classes for kids.

Oxshott Royals FC
www.oxshottroyalsfc.co.uk

GOLF COURSES

Burhill Golf Club
www.burhillgolf-club.co.uk
Burhill Road, Walton on Thames KT12 4BL
01932 227345

Silvermere Golf Complex
www.silvermere-golf.co.uk
Redhill Road, Cobham KT11 1EF
01932 584314

St. Georges Hill Golf Club
www.stgeorgeshillgolfclub.co.uk
Golf Club Road, St. George's Hill, Weybridge KT13 0NL
01932 847 758

The Wentworth Club
www.wentworthclub.com Virginia Water, Surrey GU25 4LS
01344 842201

GYMNASTICS CLASSES

Leatherhead And Dorking Gymnastics Club
www.leatherhead-gymnastics.org.uk
The Gymnasium, Guildford Road, Leatherhead KT22 9BL
01372 377718

Tolworth Gymnastics Club
www.tolworthgymclub.co.uk
Fuller Way North, Tolworth KT6 7LQ
020 8397 3111

HEALTH CLUBS, SPORTS FACILITIES, LEISURE CENTRES

ACS Cobham
www.acs-schools.com/cobham
Portsmouth Road,
Cobham, Surrey KT11 1BL
01932 588 345

ACS Cobham, ACS Egham and ACS Hillingdon families are eligible to join the Cobham Sports Centre, which includes gym facilities and the pool.

To find local fitness centres: www.thefitmap.co.uk

HORSE RIDING

To find local riding centres that are British Horse Society (BHS) approved:
www.bhs.org.uk
02476 840 500

Silvermere Equestrian Centre
www.silvermere-equestrian.com
Redhill Road, Cobham KT11 1EQ
01932 864 040

ICE SKATING AND ICE HOCKEY

Guildford Flames Ice Hockey Club
www.guildfordflames.com 01483 452 244 (head coach)

Guildford Spectrum Leisure Complex
www.guildfordspectrum.co.uk 01483 443 322

John Nike Leisuresport
www.jnlbracknell.co.uk 01344 789 000

Slough Ice Arena
www.everyoneactive.com/centre/slough-ice-arena/ 01753 894 810

MOMS & TOTS GROUPS

Ask your local council (Child Service Information) for lists of baby and toddler groups in your area.

National Childbirth Trust
The National Childbirth Trust has excellent information on all matters related to early parenting and has links to clubs for parents of young children:

www.nct.org.uk
0300 330 0700

MUSIC LESSONS

Many music lessons are offered at ACS. You will receive information at the beginning of the school year. Contact the school music department for more information.

ROWING

Kingston Rowing Club
www.kingstonrc.co.uk
The Boathouse, Canbury Gardens, Lower Ham Road,
Kingston Upon Thames KT2 5AU

Leander Club
www.leander.co.uk
Henley-on-Thames RG9 2LP

Molesey Boat Club
www.moleseyboatclub.org
Barge Walk, East Molesey KT8 9AJ

Walton Rowing Club
www.waltonrowingclub.co.uk
Sunbury Lane, Walton on Thames KT12 2JA

RUGBY

Cobham Rugby Club
www.cobhamrugby.co.uk

Surrey Rugby Football
www.surreyrugby.co.uk

STRATEGIC GAMES

The Games Workshop
www.games-workshop.com
0115 914 0000

SWIMMING AND DIVING

Many health clubs and leisure centres offer swimming classes; check the Birthday Parties section of this welcome book as well.

ACS

ACS Cobham has a very good Swimming Academy that participates in swimming training and competes in swimming galas and meets with local schools. You can find more information on the school intranet site www.acs-schools.com and at the Sports Center.

Dorking Swimming Club
www.dorkingsc.com

Elmbridge Phoenix Swimming Club
www.elmbridgephoenix.com Boys and girls aged 8-18

Guildford City Swimming Club
www.gcsc.co.uk

Woking Swimming Club
www.wokingsc.co.uk

THEATRES

Official London Theatre
www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk
020 7557 6700

Get the latest kids and family theatre news, find out about child-friendly events, and browse the show pages.

Visit London
www.visitlondon.com

LOCAL THEATRES AND CHILDREN'S THEATRES

These theatres usually do Pantomimes in the winter, a fun English tradition to do with your children. A 'panto' is a musical-comedy theatrical production based on popular fairy tale stories.

New Victorian Theatre
www.atgtickets.com/venues/new-victoria-theatre
The Peacocks Centre, Woking, GU21 6GQ
0844 871 7615

Yvonne Arnaud Theatre
www.yvonne-arnaud.co.uk
Millbrook, Guildford, Surrey
01483 440000

Theatre Royal Windsor
www.theatreroyalwindsor.co.uk
Thames Street, Windsor, SL4 1PS
01753 853 888

They also host children's birthday parties.

Polka Theatre
www.polkatheatre.com
240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1SB
020 8543 4888

All the productions at this theatre are geared to children aged 0-13.

RESTAURANTS



It is best to make a booking (reservation) for a restaurant if possible. Listed below are websites for some family-friendly restaurants in the area. Also, some pubs do not allow children or children may not be allowed after a certain time. It is best to check first to make sure children are allowed before bringing them to a pub.

Pizza Delivery

(Check to make sure they deliver to your area)

Domino's Pizza
www.dominos.co.uk

Papa Johns
www.papajohns.co.uk

Pizza Hut
www.pizzahut.co.uk

Online Restaurants that deliver

There are several online companies (Deliveroo, Just Eat and Uber Eats) where you can pre-order food from local restaurants via their website and they will deliver to you. This can be very useful if you are without transport or are too busy to drive out to a restaurant.

Deliveroo
https://deliveroo.co.uk

Just Eat
www.just-eat.co.uk

Uber Eats
www.ubereats.com
www.zizzi.co.uk

Restaurant Chains in the area

Bella Italia (Italian)
www.bellaitalia.co.uk

Carluccio's (Italian)
www.carluccios.com

The Gourmet Burger Kitchen (Burgers)
www.gbk.co.uk

Pizza Express (Italian)
www.pizzaexpress.com

Wagamama (Japanese/Noodles)
www.wagamama.com

Zizzi's (Italian)
www.zizzi.co.uk

Favourite local restaurants

COBHAM

Costa Coffee
30 High Street, Cobham KT11 3EB

The Cricketers Pub Restaurant (Inexpensive)
www.thecricketersdownside.co.uk Downside Common, Cobham KT11 3NX
01932 862 105

A Casa (Moderate)
www.acasarestaurant.co.uk
221 Portsmouth Road, Cobham KT11 1JR 01932 863 973

Fego (Inexpensive)
www.hellofego.com
14 Anyards Road, Cobham, KT11 2JZ
01932 860113

The Ivy (Expensive)
https://theivycobhambrasserie.com
48 High Street, Cobham, KT11 3EF
01932 901777

The Old Plough (Inexpensive)
www.oldploughcobham.co.uk
Station Road, Stoke D'Abernon KT11 3BN
01932 8622 44

Pizza Express (Inexpensive)
www.pizzaexpress.com
Anyards Road, Cobham KT11 2JZ
01932 862 588

Starbucks Coffee
23 Cobham High Street, Cobham KT11 3DH

Black Swan (Moderate)
www.blackswanockham.com
Old Lane, Ockham KT11 1NG
01932 862 364

ESHER

Costa Coffee
3 High Street, Esher KT10 9RL

Café Rouge (Inexpensive)
www.caferouge.co.uk
Portsmouth Road, Esher KT10 9AD
01372 465 550

Cote Brasserie (Inexpensive)
www.cote-restaurants.co.uk/
102-106 High Street, Esher KT10 9QJ
01372 462 315

Garson's Farm Garden Centre (Coffee Shop)
www.garsons.co.uk
Winterdown Road, Esher KT10 8LS

The Gigging Squid (Moderate)
www.gigglingsquid.com/restaurant/esher/
57-59 High Street
Esher, KT10 9RG
01372 469909

The Good Earth (Expensive)
www.goodearthgroup.co.uk
14-18 High Street, Esher KT10 9RT
01372 462 489

La Orient (Moderate)
www.zomato.com/london/la-orient-esher
63 High Street, Esher KT10 9RQ
01372 466 628

Seven Bluebirds (Expensive)
https://sevenbluebirds.co.uk/
10 High Street, Esher, KT10 9RT
01372 202197

The Wheatsheaf Pub (Moderate)
40 Esher Green, Esher, KT10 8AG
01372 464014

Pizza Express (Inexpensive)
www.pizzaexpress.com
34-38 High Street, Esher KT10 9QY
01372 470 435

The Prince of Wales Pub Restaurant (Inexpensive)
www.chefandbrewer.com/pub/prince-of-wales-esher/c0350/
48 West End Lane, Esher KT10 8LA
01372 465 483

Red Peppers (Inexpensive)
www.red-peppers.co.uk
45 High Street, Esher KT10 9RL
01372 467 241

WEYBRIDGE

La Casa (Moderate)
www.lacasa-restaurant.co.uk
2 Monument Hill, Weybridge KT13 8RH
01932 843 470

You can get suggestions and reviews of local restaurants using websites such as Tripadvisor and Opentable:

www.tripadvisor.co.uk
www.opentable.co.uk

SERVICES/BUSINESSES



Babysitters/nanny/childcare agencies

Allbairns
www.allbairns.com
01494 793889

American Women of Berkshire and Surrey (AWBS)
www.awbs.org.uk

Members have access to a list of babysitters by area.

Greycoat Placements
www.greycoatplacements.co.uk
020 7233 9950

Last Minute Childcare (based in Cobham for all childcare)
www.lastminute-childcare.com
01932 863697

Mortimer Nannies
www.mortimernannies.co.uk
07793 502 483

Sitters Babysitting Agency
www.sitters.co.uk
03330 032888

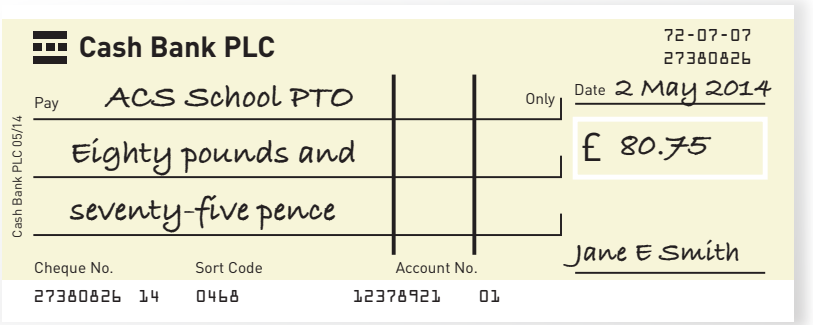
Smileys Childcare Agency
www.smileys-childcare.co.uk
0845 201 1630

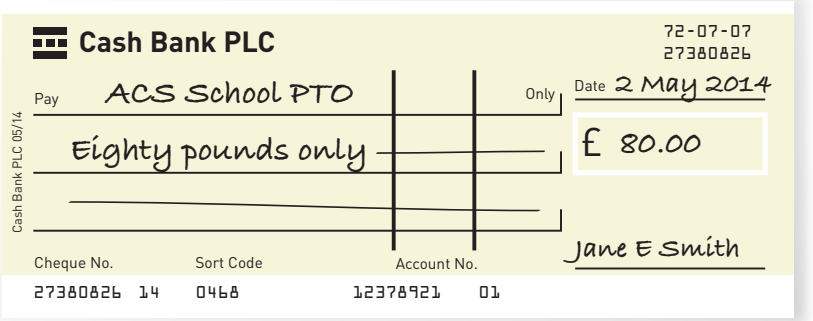
Banking

BANKING INFORMATION:

- A deposit slip in the UK is called a paying-in-slip.
- To write a British cheque: the first line is for the payee, the second line is for pounds, the third line is for pence.
- Opening a bank account in the UK can be more difficult than one may expect. Make sure you come prepared. Bring along a picture ID, proof of residence (at least one utility bill or other document with your UK address), six months worth of prior bank statements, and even a marriage certificate (if opening a joint account).

- If your bank card is lost or stolen, you cannot get an immediate replacement. The bank card must be posted to you, which can take 3-5 working days.
- If your spouse was the first to open the bank account and you wish to be added, please be patient, the process can take a couple of weeks.
- NOTARY – The process of getting documents notarised is not as quick in the UK as you may be used to in your home country. You have to make an appointment locally, then the documents are sent to London (or you can drive them and wait in line there).





Note: The 1st line is for the payee, 2nd line for pounds, and 3rd line for pence.

Barclays
www.barclays.co.uk

Citibank
www.citibank.co.uk

Halifax
www.halifax.co.uk

HSBC
www.hsbc.co.uk

Lloyds
www.lloydsbank.com

NatWest
www.natwest.com

Santander
www.santander.co.uk

Car valeting

Finesse Detailing
www.finessedetailinguk.co.uk
07711 905 868

Finesse Detailing provides a professional and reliable mobile vehicle valeting service. They offer a wide range of services and will come to your home or office

Insurance companies

A Plan Insurance
www.aplan.co.uk
01993 894700

Aviva
www.aviva.co.uk
0345 0307041

Direct Line
www.directline.com

Halifax
www.halifax.co.uk/insurance

Quantum
www.quantumplc.com
020 3137 5087

Online Quotes from several providers:
www.comparethemarket.com
www.confused.com
www.gocompare.com
www.moneysavingexpert.com

Newsagents

Newsagents are located on the High Streets in most towns. If you want to have home delivery of a newspaper, check with your local newsagent to see if you can get on the delivery list.

Online directories

www.yell.com
Online yellow pages.

www.locallife.co.uk
Online guide for everything in your local area (search by city or post code).

www.checkatrade.com
Online guide to finding reputable local tradespeople for jobs and services around your home using reviews from customers.

Passport photos (including US size)

There are photo booths in many large supermarkets (but these won't do US size).

Cobham Post Office (does UK, US and other countries)
20 Hollyhedge Road, Cobham, KT11 3DG
0345 6112970

Snappy Snaps
www.snappysnaps.co.uk
0161 946 6219

Pets

If you're planning on bringing a pet with you when you move to the UK, please be aware that this involves many rules and regulations, possibly including quarantine. Read up on the rules so everything goes as smoothly

as possible. The information also applies to pets leaving and returning to the UK, for example, if you want to take your dog with you on holiday to France. The Department for Food Environment and Rural Affairs has all the information you need.

Pet insurance

Dog insurance is recommended in the UK as bills for infections and injuries can run quite high. Check with your vet for more information on insurance.

Dog walking/training

Association of Pet Dog Trainers
www.apdt.co.uk
07958 264191

A respected organisation that guarantees the quality of its member trainers. You can search for a trainer in your area.

Dog Boarding/Sitting

Talk to your vet about reputable local dog boarding and sitting services they recommend.

Bruces Doggy Day Care (grooming and training)
www.brucesdoggydaycare.co.uk
Cobham Rd, Stoke D'Abernon, KT11 3QF
0345 305 2554

Royvon (Doggy hotels and training)
https://royvon.co.uk
Portsmouth Road, Esher, KT10 9AW
0208 819 7374

Travel insurance

Even if you have private health insurance, travel insurance in the UK is important. If you miss a flight because of illness, you will have to forfeit your entire holiday if you do not have travel insurance. It is often better to buy an annual policy through your insurance company than to buy it through the holiday provider each time you travel.

Check with your bank to see if you have or can get travel insurance with your account.

www.confused.com
www.gocompare.com
www.comparethemarket.com

These three websites provide quotes from various providers for all types of insurance.

Post Office

www.postoffice.co.uk
0330 123 3690

Travel insurance is one of the many services offered by the Post Office. You can buy annual or single-trip insurance, insurance specific for geographic regions of the world, and include hazardous pursuits such as some watersports and ski-ing.



SHOPPING

Antique markets

Portobello Market
www.portobelloroad.co.uk

The world's largest antiques market – open every Saturday (7am – 5pm), other shops are open six days a week. Portobello Road is three kilometres west of Marble Arch and easy to reach by road or underground from anywhere in London. There are two underground stations: Ladbroke Grove (Hammersmith & City Lines) or Notting Hill Gate (Central, Circle and District Lines). The following buses stop in or near the market: 7, 12, 23, 27, 28, 31, 70, 94 and 328. Check the website before you travel.

Areas for shopping

LONDON

Some of the many different areas to visit for specific needs include:

- London electronics area – Tottenham Court Road
- London jewellery district – Hatton Garden (Holborn Tube) www.hattongarden.com
- London department stores – Oxford and Regent Streets, Knightsbridge area
- Designer shops – Old and New Bond Streets and Sloane Street area
- Small fashion/boutiques – streets around Covent Garden and Carnaby Street
- Bespoke tailoring – Piccadilly, Jermyn Street and Savile Row
- Music shops – the record stores and also the Soho area
- Bookshops – Waterstone's and WH Smith, also old book shops on Charing Cross Road
- Westfield Mall – indoor mall, Westfield.com
- Bentall Centre – indoor mall in Kingston, www.thebentallcentre.com

LONDON MARKETS

Borough Market
www.boroughmarket.org.uk
020 7407 1002

Borough Market is London's oldest food market. It is on the south bank of the Thames and has a long and distinguished history as a wholesale fruit and vegetable market. Borough Market is busy, noisy and bustling with wonderful produce. It is best to go early and bring a large, strong bag or shopping trolley. If you are not familiar with the produce on the stalls,

or you are not sure how to cook it, just ask – the traders will be delighted to tell you about their specialities. Check out the website for a breakdown of the important areas. Scandelicious has a stall at Borough Market where they sell freshly prepared Scandinavian dishes on Fridays and Saturdays. The Market is a bit of a maze, but exploration yields delicious rewards!

It is open from Monday to Saturday. Not all stalls are open on Mondays and Tuesdays but Wednesdays to Saturday the market is fully open.
Monday-Friday: 10am-5pm
Saturday: 8am-5pm

Brick Lane Markets
www.sundayupmarket.co.uk
020 7770 6028

Sunday UpMarket – over 140 stalls selling fashion, accessories, crafts, undoubtedly one of London's most exciting and imaginative markets. The market is in the Old Truman Brewery and the many things you will find are one-off bespoke items produced by the stallholders themselves. You can find everything from edgy women's wear, customised men's clothing, high fashion, and beautifully-tailored children's clothes to handmade jewellery. UpMarket's famous food area includes Ethiopian hand roasted coffee, Turkish specialities, lovely Moroccan dishes, Spanish paellas and empanadas, hand-rolled sushi (done in front of you), Japanese sweets, and savoury pancake, Carrom Cafe's lassi, chai and Indian street snacks, Thai and Caribbean food, etc.

Sundays: 10am-5pm

Ely's Yard (entrances on Brick Lane & Hanbury Street)
www.bricklanemarket.com/events/elys_yard/EY.html

The Old Truman Brewery, London E1
www.trumanbrewery.com
(Aldgate East/Liverpool Street Tube)
020 7770 6000

The Backyard Market – with almost 100 stalls; jewellery, clothing, accessories, arts and crafts, food and more, this market has breathed new life into a once derelict and unassuming warehouse on Brick Lane since 2006.

Broadway Market
www.broadwaymarket.co.uk

Broadway Market in London E8 runs from London Fields to Regent's Canal. It is a section of a pedestrian and cycle-friendly route from Hackney Empire, past London Fields station and throughout the park. Bethnal Green is the nearest tube station. Food: African, French, English, Caribbean. Fashion: Hats, shoes and frocks. The inventive come for the retro and vintage pieces. There is plenty for grown-ups and lots of pretty stuff for babies. The neighbourhood is home to a warren of tiny studios and galleries; the arts charity space houses 60 artists in its Mare Street building alone. Exhibitions appear suddenly – watch for the posters, especially in the summer.

Spitalfields Market
www.spitalfields.co.uk

In addition to the many shops and places to eat:

- Arts Market – set on Market Street in Spitalfields, the Spitalfields Arts Market is a great place to browse and buy affordable art direct from established and up and coming artists; runs from the first Thursday through to the Sunday of each month. In November and December the Arts Market runs every week up to Christmas.
- Spitalfields Traders Market – the stalls range from contemporary and vintage fashion, music, bespoke children's toys, jewellery and accessories and interiors for the home. The market is also surrounded by a host of independent boutiques, food shops and restaurants. Plus you have the Old Spitalfields Market right next door. The Traders Market has up to 110 stalls on its busiest days. Held under the cover of Foster & Partners elegant glass canopy in Crispin Place, Spitalfields Traders Market is weatherproof and wheelchair and pushchair accessible. Five minutes walk from Liverpool Street Station.

  Check the website for the opening times for each market.

Columbia Road Flower Market
www.columbiaroad.info

Green-fingered shoppers are spoilt for choice at the Columbia Road Flower Market in London's East End. Every Sunday morning, lively traders fill the narrow Victorian street with their colourful plants and flowers. Visit at around 1pm for the best bargains. Columbia Road, London E2 7NN (Tube: Old Street or Bethnal Green).
Sunday: 8am-2pm

Portobello Market (see Antiques)

Camping/skiing/hiking stores

Cotswold Outdoor
www.cotswoldoutdoor.com
www.snowandrock.com

Field & Trek
www.fieldandtrek.com

Millets
www.millets.co.uk

Children's clothing

Boden
www.boden.co.uk

H&M
www.hm.com/gb

Monsoon
www.monsoon.co.uk

Polarnopyret
www.polarnopyret.co.uk

Next
www.next.co.uk

Zara
www.zara.com

Children's toys

Early Learning Centre
www.earlylearningcentre.co.uk

The Entertainer
www.theentertainer.com

Craft shops

Hobbycraft
www.hobbycraft.co.uk

Do It Yourself (DIY)

B&Q
www.diy.com

Homebase
www.homebase.co.uk

Wickes
www.wickes.co.uk

Electrical appliance stores

Argos
www.argos.co.uk

Catalogue store – easiest to shop online

Currys PC World
www.currys.co.uk

Robert Dyas (Garden, Household, Electricals)
www.robertdyas.co.uk

Farmer's markets

The following websites provide listings of farmer's markets in your area, just enter your postcode:

www.farmshop.uk.com
www.cpre.org.uk/

Gifts

www.notonthehighstreet.com

Not on the High Street is an online store where you can find a wealth of beautiful gifts for everyone for all occasions and can also be personalised.

Grocery stores

Please note that in the UK you pack your own groceries in some stores and you are encouraged to bring your own bags. All stores charge 10p per bag to reduce the use of plastic bags. You will need a £1 coin deposit to use a shopping trolley. If you have a Maestro (Switch) or Solo card (debit card from a local bank), you can get up to £50 cash back at grocery stores.

Most large stores close at 4:00pm on Sundays. Many stores offer online shopping and a 7-day delivery service, please check their websites for specific details.

Asda
www.asda.co.uk
UK version of Wal-mart.

Budgens
www.budgens.co.uk

Marks and Spencer Food (also Homewares, Clothing)
www.marksandspencer.com

Morrisons
www.morrisons.com

Sainsbury's
www.sainsburys.co.uk

Tesco
www.tesco.com

Waitrose
www.waitrose.com

Ocado (online delivery only. No high street stores)
www.ocado.com

Costco
www.costco.co.uk

Membership required to shop here; check website for membership rules.

Specialty food

Garsons Farm Shop
www.garsons.co.uk
Winterdown Road, Esher, KT10 8LS
01372 460181

Abel and Cole
www.abelandcole.co.uk
08452 626262

Online ordering and delivery of organic produce, dairy items and meat along with wine/spirits and all natural household products.

American Sweets
www.americansweets.co.uk

It is much more than sweets! Store sells healthy cereals, barbecue sauce, salad dressing, cooking ingredients, Wheat Thins, and many more American food staples. Usually minimal to free delivery charge depending on how much you order.

Dairy Crest
www.dairycrest.co.uk
0845 606 3606

Home delivery of milk and other dairy products. NOTE: In England, milk is not fortified with vitamin D, which aids in the absorption of calcium.

Goodness Direct
www.goodnessdirect.co.uk
0871 871 6611

Online fresh, eco and organic shopping (groceries and other household products). Free delivery with purchases over £35.

Riverford Farms
www.riverford.co.uk
01803 227 227

Organic home delivery.

Skyco
www.skyco.uk.com
01483 776 444

Specialises in delivering American products.

Home furnishings

IKEA
www.ikea.com/gb/en/
020 3645 0000

Huge home furnishing store at reasonable prices.

John Lewis
www.johnlewis.com

Department store stocking household goods, furniture, bedding, clothing, gifts, small electricals, electronics, sporting apparel and equipment and more.

Newspaper delivery

News Team
www.newsteamgroup.co.uk

Paper goods/stationery

Not on The High Street
www.notonthehighstreet.com
Paper goods and stationery as well as stylish and contemporary speciality gifts and personalised items.

Paperchase
www.paperchase.co.uk

Multiple locations, cards, pens, wrapping paper, ribbons.

Smythson of Bond Street
www.smythson.com

London's finest personal stationery, diaries, desk accessories.

WH Smith
www.whsmith.co.uk

School supplies

Ryman Stationer
www.ryman.co.uk

Staples
www.staples.co.uk

WH Smith
www.whsmith.co.uk

Sheet music and instruments

ABC Music
www.abcmusic.co.uk
85 High Street, Esher, KT10 9QA
01372 466 195

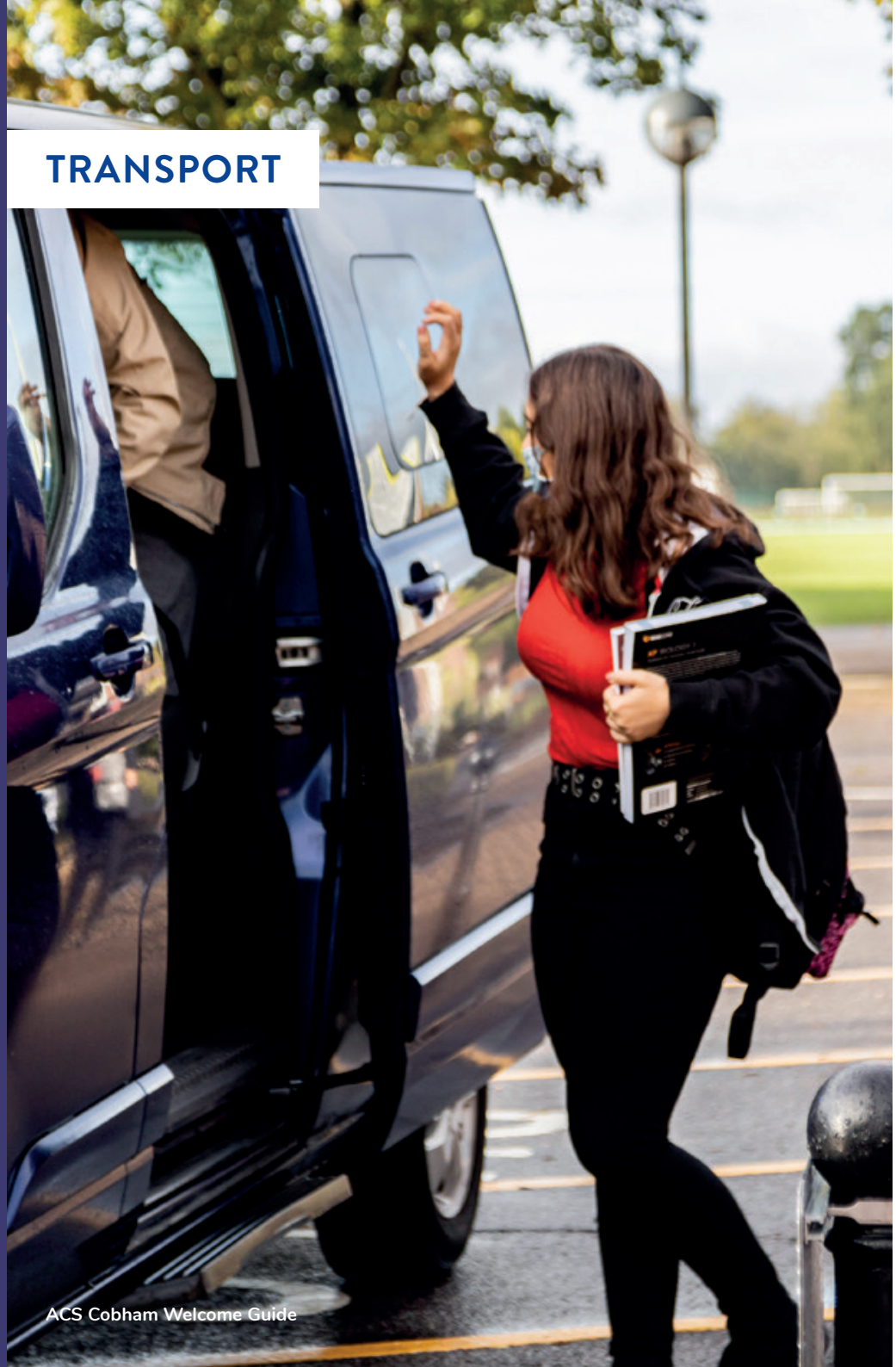
Britten's Music
www.brittensmusic.co.uk
13 Broadway, Woodham, New Haw, KT15 3EU
01932 351165

Sporting goods/apparel

JD Sports
www.jdsports.co.uk

Sweaty Betty (Women's work out clothing)
www.sweatybetty.com

Sports Direct
www.sportsdirect.com



TRANSPORT

Driving

Driving your car in the UK can be quite challenging. Purchase the Highway Code (details all the rules and regulations of driving in the UK) or access it online via www.direct.gov.uk under 'travel and transport.' You can also get Know Your Traffic Signs from your local newsagent or the AA.

- Purchase an A-to-Z Street Directory of your area at a local bookstore or newsagent.
- Beware of the traffic cameras! There are lots of speeding cameras installed and violations are recorded on your licence. If you get too many points, you could lose your licence.
- Helpful websites for driving and directions:
  www.maps.google.co.uk
  www.theaa.com
  www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england
  (info about roadworks and motorways)
- GPS/Navigation Systems are very helpful when driving in the UK. If your car doesn't come equipped with one, you may want to consider buying a portable device.

To drive your own car in the UK, you will need the following:

- Valid driving licence.
- Automobile insurance.
- Registration.
- MOT. The purpose of the MOT is to ensure that your car complies with key roadworthiness and environmental requirements. Once a car is three years old, it must have an MOT every year. Many garages do MOT testing which takes about an hour; look for one with an MOT sign.
- Vehicle tax – all cars in the UK must have vehicle tax.
  www.gov.uk/vehicle-tax

GENERAL DRIVING TIPS

- Even if you don't need to take the tests in order to get a UK Driving Licence, it is a good idea to purchase and study the Official Highway Code (www.gov.uk/ browse/driving/highway-code) along with a Know Your Traffic Signs (www.gov.uk/ government/publications/know-your-traffic-signs) or you can purchase printed copies of both from a bookstore or newsagent.
- Beware of the traffic cameras! They love to catch speeders, and if you get too many points, you could lose your licence.
- www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england is a great site for info about road works and motorways, including up-to-date traffic information.

DRIVING LICENCE

The body that regulates matters related to obtaining your licence, registering or transferring your car is the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency

By law, you must get a licence within 12 months of your arrival.

- If you have a US licence, you will need to take both the written theory test and a road test to obtain a UK licence.
- When you come to live in the UK you can use your US licence or a US International Driving Permit (IDP) for one year, starting 'on the date you arrived with the intention of taking up residency.' After one year, you are driving illegally, and your Motor Insurance may declare your coverage void.
- Commonwealth countries can exchange their driver's licence for a UK licence without doing a test in the first two years of residency in the UK.
- European Community (EC) and European Economic Area (EEA) licences are valid with the option to exchange them for a UK licence. Obtain a Driver Vehicle and Licensing Agency (DVLA) form reference D100 from a Post Office for more specific information.
- **PLEASE CONSULT THE DVLA WEBSITE FOR UP-TO-DATE AND EXTENSIVE INFORMATION MEETING YOUR SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS.**

The process of getting a UK licence takes 3-6 months:

- Apply for a UK Provisional Licence (applications can be obtained from any post office). The process takes 10-14 days and you must provide a passport with your application as proof of identity, so planning ahead around travel schedules is important.

- Book a Theory Test appointment once you receive your Provisional Licence. (0300 200 1122 or at www.gov.uk/book-theory-test).

  The Theory Test is a computerised 'touch-screen' test, where the minimum pass mark is 43 correct answers out of 50 questions, plus a Hazard Perception Test, which monitors your reactions to video footage of developing hazards. To prepare for the test you should get an up to date Highway Code, a book with current DSA Theory Test Question Bank and a CD-ROM simulating the Hazard Perception Test. Buy these in most bookshops or borrow them from a friend.

  The website noted above also offers an interactive mock test. This is very helpful to get familiar with the test questions and format.

- Book a Practical (Road) Test appointment after passing Theory Test (same contact details as above). More information on the Practical Driving test can be found on this website page, www.gov.uk/driving-test/what-happens-during-test

  This driving test is taken with a DSA Observer who scores your performance while driving on local streets and executing basic manoeuvres. The test is about 40 minutes and includes driving through typical roundabouts, pedestrian crossings, etc. The test comprises of five elements, eyesight, show me tell me questions, general driving ability, reversing driving and independent driving (see the website above for details on all these elements).

  Driving lessons from a licenced instructor are strongly recommended to help prepare for the driving test. Instructors teach UK driving rules and coach on how to pass the actual test.

DRIVING INSTRUCTORS

AA (Automobile Association) Driving School
www.theaa.com
0330 100 7470

BSM (British School of Motoring)
www.bsm.co.uk
0330 100 7500

International Drivers Service
www.internationaldriversservice.com
020 8570 9190

Focuses on the expat community.

Elmbridge Automatic Driving School
www.elmbridgeautomatic.co.uk
020 8224 9911

Automatic lessons only.

Auto insurance

Insurance Comparison Sites:

A Plan Insurance
www.aplan.co.uk
01252 329 772

Free advice and insurance comparisons from independent intermediaries authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

There are also websites that provide insurance comparisons and quotes:
www.gocompare.com
www.confused.com
www.moneysavingexpert.com

Geico
www.geico.com/information/aboutinsurance/overseas

Geico International has locations in UK, but will only insure with a US licence and the intention to return to the US.

Breakdown insurance

AA (Automobile Association)
www.theaa.com
0800 316 2456

Greenflag Breakdown cover
www.greenflag.com
0345 246 2766

RAC (Royal Automobile Club)
www.rac.co.uk
0330 159 1111

Car servicing/repairs

National Vehicle Servicing
www.nationalvehicleservicing.com
0870 850 6651

They will come to your house to service your car.

Kwik-Fit
www.kwik-fit.com
0800 222 1111

They are experts in automotive parts repair and replacement including tyres, exhausts, brakes and MOT testing. Several locations in the area, including (check website for local stores).

Halfords
www.halfords.com

A retail store selling automotive supplies, including bulbs, batteries, tools, sat navs and car seats. They will do simple repairs and MOTs. Check the website for locations near you.

Parking

Many car parks use the Pay & Display system to pay for parking. Drive into the car park, park your car and then go to the Pay & Display machine. Pay for the amount of time that you think you'll be staying, and then put the sticker on the driver's window (on the inside) or on the dashboard. Parking violations are monitored carefully so make sure the parking time is not exceeded, even in store parking garages when the free time is limited. In many locations you can pay the charge over the phone or through an app by providing your plate number and location. Instructions can be lengthy, but once signed up, repeat parking is easier.

Many town councils and station car parks also use Ringo as an alternative to cash or card payment for parking. Download the app onto your smartphone, create an account and pay for your parking using your stored vehicle and credit card information. www.myringgo.co.uk. There are also signs by the payment machines in the car parks with more information on Ringo.

Parking on the side of the road is allowed at certain times on a SINGLE YELLOW line and never on a DOUBLE YELLOW line. The rules vary from borough to borough, but generally parking is free on a single yellow line after 6:30pm and on Sundays.

London Congestion/Low-Emission Zones

Transport for London imposes a charge per weekday on most vehicles being used in Central London. You pay the charge for the day (between the hours of 07:00-18:00, Monday-Friday) and can drive within the charging zone as often as you want within that day. Details, maps and charging zones can be found on:

www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/congestion-charge

HOW DOES IT WORK?
If your journey takes you into the charging zone (signed with a large letter "C" in a red circle) you can either pay in advance, pay before midnight that day, or, for a small surcharge, pay before midnight the following charging day. Map of charging zone: content.tfl.gov.uk/congestion-charge-zone-map.pdf

ZONE OPERATES:
7:00am to 6:00pm weekdays excluding bank and public holidays. Pay online: www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/congestion-charge. A network of cameras reads vehicle number plates as you enter, drive around and leave the zone. Any vehicle recorded as having been in the zone during charging hours but where no daily charge has been paid by midnight the following charging day must pay a penalty charge.

ULTRA LOW EMISSION ZONE (ULEZ) CHARGE
https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/ultra-low-emission-zone

This is a relatively new charge aimed at improving air quality in the city of London, and has been imposed by Transport for London to charge vehicles entering Central London. A map on the website shows the area covered by the ULEZ. http://lruc.content.tfl.gov.uk/ultra-low-emission-zone-map.pdf

Almost all vehicles must pay the ULEZ charge if they enter the zone, and the charge is in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. More information on the charge, the area of the city it covers, and methods of paying can be found at the website https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/ultra-low-emission-zone. By entering your vehicle's registration details you will find out if you need to and how to pay.

Tips for driving on the European continent

If you are going to drive on the Continent, get full coverage (UK plus continent) when purchasing car insurance and include breakdown coverage. It is less expensive for the whole year than buying it a week at a time.

Visit www.theaa.com to learn the rules for each country. Most of the items listed below are required for each country and can be purchased at the Euro Tunnel shop or at Halfords.

If you are planning to drive into some of the largest cities in France you would be advised to obtain a CRIT'Air sticker for your car. Paris, Lyon, Lille, Marseille, Toulouse, Chambery, and Grenoble have recently been added to the growing number of low emissions zones affecting UK-registered vehicles in Europe.

Drivers within the restricted area in one of these cities have to display a Vignette (sticker) in their windscreen.

If you're heading to France by car and there's even only a small chance you might be driving in one of these restricted areas it is advisable to apply for the sticker so that you're covered. (Without the sticker you could be fined.) Delivery of the sticker should be within 30 days.

The following is a list of safety kit required by most European countries and you would be advised to buy it, and check on the AA website if anything else is required by the country you are visiting:

- GB sticker on the rear of the vehicle if you do not have "GB" on your registration (licence) plate.
- Headlight beam adjustments for driving on the right.
- Warning triangle and fire extinguisher.
- First aid kit.
- Spare light bulbs (lights must be in full working order).

Eurotunnel

www.eurotunnel.com
08443 35 35 35

Reservations and ticket information for the train service that you drive your car onto and takes you through the English Channel tunnel. You stay inside

your car and the journey takes you from Folkestone (Kent, UK) to Calais (France) in just 35 minutes.

Airports

Check for flight arrival and departure information:

www.gatwickairport.com
www.heathrowairport.com
www.southamptonairport.com
www.stanstedairport.com
www.london-luton.co.uk
www.londoncityairport.com

AIRPORT PARKING

APH parking
www.aph.com

They will provide several quotes including a 'Meet and Greet' service which will valet park your car for you.

Flypark
www.flypark.co.uk
0871 360 2443

Public transport

The network of trains and buses is extensive and gets you safely and reliably to most destinations. Some bus lines within Surrey run throughout the night. It is helpful to have a tube map at hand and you can use the journey planner feature on the 'Transport for London' website:

www.tfl.gov.uk

The Tube has an app for smart phones that will provide live schedule information and journey planning.

One way to pay for your journey is with the Oyster Card, which is a pre-paid card that can be purchased at most Kiosks that display the 'Oyster' sign. There is a £5 deposit and the card can be 'filled' with funds to use on future travel. The card gets swiped at the various entry and exit barriers and funds automatically deducted. Information on the Oyster card and online ordering can be found online at: https://oyster.tfl.gov.uk

CONTACTLESS AND MOBILE PAY

Another way to pay for your tube and bus travel is by tapping in and out of the tube station barriers or when entering a bus using your contactless bank card. If your bank card issued on Visa, Mastercard, Maestro or American Express shows the contactless payment symbol, you can use it to pay as you go straight away. You'll pay an adult rate fare.

Many contactless cards issued outside the UK can also be used to pay as you go for travel (overseas transaction fees may apply):
American Express (AMEX)
MasterCard and Maestro (some cards issued in the USA, Canada and the Netherlands aren't accepted)
Visa and V PAY (some cards issued outside the UK aren't accepted)

MOBILE PAYMENTS

Using a mobile payment to pay as you go is the same as using a contactless card. You can make mobile payments with devices such as phones, watches, key fobs, stickers or wristbands.

You can use different mobile payments to travel:
Apple Pay
Barclaycard Contactless Mobile
bPay
Fitbit Pay
Garmin Pay
Google Pay
Samsung Pay

If you use a mobile payment associated with a non-UK bank card, your card may not work or you may be charged overseas transaction fees. Check with your card issuer.

Most bus and tram travel is free for children under 16 and at a reduced rate for students up to 18; their Oyster card needs to be signed by the school and students will need to carry a photo ID. More information on the various types of Oyster cards can be found at the web address above.

From most Surrey destinations, Southwest Trains runs a service into London Waterloo, with stops at other Central London stations. Schedules and fares can be found at:

www.southwesternrailway.com/

Biking in Central London

A major bike rental scheme has been established under the name 'Santander Cycles'. Many pick-up and drop-off locations (docking stations) allow for easy commute and are a fun alternative to driving or public transport. The scheme has been highly successful, particularly in congested areas. The scheme is operated by 'Transport for London' and all information can be found at: https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/cycling/santander-cycles

Rail Services

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- A one-way ticket is called a single journey.
- A round trip ticket is called a return ticket.

When going into London, you can buy a day travelcard which you can use on the train, the underground, and buses for the day. Tickets are much cheaper if you arrive in London after 10:00am and leave after 7:00pm.

- This journey planner website is great for when you want to include train stations and underground stops:

  journeyplanner.tfl.gov.uk

National Rail
www.nationalrail.co.uk

The UK's domestic rail network

Eurostar
www.eurostar.com

Eurostar is a passenger only train service from London St. Pancras or Ebbsfleet (in Kent) to the Continent (that's what the British call Europe). The most popular destinations are Paris and Brussels, but there are many new services and new ones are constantly being added. It's a very quick and convenient way of travelling across the English Channel and accessing Europe. A journey to Paris from St. Pancras takes less than 2 and a half hours.

Southwest Trains
www.southwesternrailway.com/

The local rail service from most Surrey destinations into London Waterloo. You can take a bike onto the trains outside of commuting hours.

Family and Friends Railcard
www.familyandfriends-railcard.co.uk

Riding the rails across Britain can be even more economical with the annual Family and Friends Railcard. It can save a family up to one-third off adult fares and 60 percent off child fares. Anyone travelling with a child who is between five and 15 years old is eligible. There are some savings restrictions during peak train travel times.

Network Rail Card
www.network-railcard.co.uk

A Network Railcard gives you one third off most rail fares for journeys in the Network Railcard area and can also save you money on trips to and around London. The Network Railcard costs £30 (in 2016) and is valid for 12 months.

Car rentals

Be sure to specify an automatic transmission car if that's what you prefer and book well in advance for large cars. The usual international car rental services are available at airports and city centre locations. Some smaller local services offer good value.

Zipcar
www.zipcar.co.uk

For short-term rental needs, such as shopping or airport trips, you may be able to use Zipcar.

Avis
www.avis.co.uk
Staines
0344 544 6097

Budget Car and Van Rental
www.budget.co.uk

Currie Motors Car and Van Hire
www.curriemotors.co.uk/car-van-hire
161 Chertsey Road, Twickenham TW1 1ER
020 3861 8873

Free Collection and delivery.

Enterprise Rent A Car
www.enterprise.co.uk
Unit 18, Business Park, Trade City, Avro Way, Weybridge KT13 0YF
01932 350 500

Free Pick up Service.

Europcar
www.europcar.co.uk
Kingston on Thames
0371 384 1554

Hertz Car Rental
www.hertz.co.uk
Sunbury on Thames
01932 787655

Kendall Car Hire
www.kendallcars.com
Kingslea Works, Kingston Road, Leatherhead KT22 7SN
01372 376655

Key Drive
www.keydrive.co.uk
107 Kingston Road, Leatherhead KT22 7SU
01372 374 301

Free Pick up Service.

Parkhurst Self Drive Hire
www.parkhurst.biz
Island Farm Drive, West Molesey KT8 2UU
020 8979 2067

Taxis/private car services

In the London area there are “black cabs” which are licenced taxis and “minicabs” which are private hire taxis that may or may not be licenced. Check www.tfl.gov.uk for listings of all licenced taxis.

Black cabs may be hailed on the street or picked up at taxi ranks. They will have a meter showing the fare. While they will typically be more expensive than minicabs, they are carefully monitored for safe and knowledgeable drivers.

Minicabs must be booked in advance or in person at their place of business. They do not have meters, so the fare should be agreed upon in advance. If a minicab driver approaches you on the street, do not take the ride. It may well be an unlicenced cab and may be unsafe. The CABWISE text message campaign provides a safe way to find a taxi anywhere. By texting “home” to 60835, you will receive a text reply with the numbers of one taxi and two local licenced minicab companies.

Fairmile Cars
https://fairmilecarsexecutive.webs.com
01932 862744

Addison Lee
www.addisonlee.com
0207 387 8888

Cobham Cars
www.cobhamcars.com
01932 863 335

Esher Station Cars
www.esherstationcars.co.uk
020 8398 7676

Uber
www.uber.com
You can also use Uber taxis to get around London and the South East of England. Uber has a large presence in this part of the country. Simply download the Uber app onto your smartphone, create an account and follow the instructions to book your car.

For safety, always check with the driver prior to getting into a waiting minicab or Uber car that it is the car you have ordered.

CULTURE SHOCK

"I didn't expect it to be SO different."

HOW TO SURVIVE CULTURE SHOCK

"The kids are homesick."

Source: www.tvawc.com

How to survive culture shock

A very useful resource for information on the challenges of expatriate life and global living is the Youtube channel of Robin Pascoe. Robin is a wonderfully warm and funny writer and speaker who, through her personal experience, is an expert on the highs and lows of being an expat, and accompanying spouse. She has published books on the topics of a Moveable Marriage: Relocate your Relationship without breaking it, A Broad Abroad; the Expat Wife's guide to living abroad and Raising Global Nomads: Parenting Abroad in an on-Demand world. All these books are sold on amazon.co.uk. Her Youtube channel features bite-sized nuggets of information and advice on these topics. www.youtube.com search Robin Pascoe.

CULTURE SHOCK AND ITS STAGES

Culture shock is a label for the disorientation and related feelings of anxiety and stress an individual experiences when moving from one culture to another. It has become an important area of study as society becomes increasingly globally mobile. Those who move from culture to culture will feel some degree of culture shock.

Therefore, it is important to understand its dynamics in order to best support yourself and your family towards successful adjustment to your new environment.

What are the stages, or symptoms, of culture shock? What does culture shock look like? Symptoms fall into four general categories:

Stage one, often called the honeymoon stage, is marked by excited anticipation. During this stage, you experience pleasant symptoms of excitement at being in a new place with interesting and new things to do and see. Some people never progress past this initial stage of exhilaration in being abroad. These people spend their entire stay in a state of mild euphoria, behaving like permanent tourists: travelling to new and wonderful places, forming friendships exclusively with other expatriates, and maintaining their old lifestyle. For most, however, the honeymoon period passes and they move on to the second and most problematic stage of culture shock.

Stage two is marked by discouragement, doubt, apathy, and a generally negative attitude toward England. Your conversations during this stage tend to concentrate on the things you can't buy, the things you have to do without, and all the things the British do "wrong" (which means

"differently"). This can be thought of as the flight stage because one often thinks about leaving England during this time.

Stage three is a stage of immersion. With perseverance, you will arrive at it often by the end of the first year. You are now learning the cues of English culture and seldom experience that old sense of disorientation. You have met and socialised with English neighbours or co-workers, might have taken a course in English history, and discover British vocabulary and pronunciation creeping into your speech. You are becoming immersed in the English way of life, rather than standing on the outside, critically looking in.

The fourth and final stage of cultural adjustment is marked by full participation in the English way of life. Now you rarely find yourself thinking in categories of "them" and "us". This is the final stage of adjustment. You are now functionally and emotionally adjusted to life in England and are living with the ease you experienced before the move.

TREATMENT

The treatment of culture shock applies to two stages – the flight stage, which is the most uncomfortable part of adjustment. The coping behaviours you choose during this period may determine the tone of the rest of your stay in England.

Crisis experts say that an individual undergoing stress following a change, such as a move to another culture, will seek to resolve their state of unbalance within a four to six week period – the average length of time one will tolerate this anxiety. It is not uncommon for people to react with negative coping behaviours that do not serve them well in the long run. Examples would be social withdrawal, chronic complaining, or even alcoholism. It is therefore critical to take inventory of your consciously or unconsciously chosen coping mechanisms and select those that promote a positive, long-term lifestyle.

One of the first and easiest steps in the treatment of culture shock can begin before you arrive, but certainly any time subsequently. Get as much information as you can about England, its customs, history, climate, and so on. Also, acquire basic information before you need it: contact a doctor and dentist before the need arises; familiarise yourself with emergency medical procedures; plan the steps to take if your car breaks down; learn about public transportation, This step is called "doing your homework". By doing homework on England in general and preparing for specific family emergencies, you begin to build basic confidence in your ability to function here.

Secondly, try to fend off feelings of depression by taking concrete measures to adapt. For example, familiarise yourself with your surroundings. Keep your explorations local and leave the rest of London and England until later. Buy maps of your locality and trace some of the routes on foot; read local newspapers, clip addresses, file some away, and visit others. Familiarise yourself with your surroundings in an emotional sense too. Chat with a local shopkeeper; have a cup of tea at the local coffee shop to do some subtle people watching; become a regular reader of the notice board at your local library and join one of the activities listed there. This goes beyond the intellectual task of "homework" and requires "doing", which further builds up your self-image as one who competently negotiates British daily life. Local explorations can also be made into fun outings for the family to enjoy.

Another way to get the better of "down" feelings is to establish a goal and take steps to achieve it. Have you ever wanted to study art, learn a second language, develop a green thumb, hike regularly in the countryside, and collect antiques? A constructive activity is like a reward for more frustrating aspects of cultural adjustment.

Eventually, you will develop a workable philosophy about your stay in England. Hopefully it will include enthusiasm ("It's a wonderful country and I'm lucky to be here.") and opportunism ("I'm going to take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime chance!"). You want to do more than survive – you can choose to thrive!

FAMILY CULTURE SHOCK

Moving away from home, familiar surroundings, and the support network of family and friends puts the entire family into a state of imbalance. The roles in a marriage often change, especially if one spouse leaves work to follow another's career advancement. There is often realignment on parental responsibilities as well, which may initially result in feelings of resentment or anger.

It is especially important during this first year to practice open and on-going communication between all family members. It is important, also, that children be allowed to talk about uncomfortable emotions such as anger, frustration, and resentment, to minimise any inappropriate acting out and displacement of these feelings outside of the home.

CHILDREN

Children live in the here and now. Until about age 12 children aren't able to "distance" themselves from their environment as adults can. Children need to appreciate and like their environment for healthy self-development. Therefore, try not to share with them your negative reactions to the new

culture. This will only serve to alienate children in the sole world they feel they occupy; it will inhibit their unfolding self-identity that requires identifying with the culture they are in now. A child needs to love his world and himself in it during early stages of personal development.

PRESCHOOL AGE

Be aware that although adult life includes what goes on outside the home, a preschooler's life centres on what's going on inside the home. S/he is very affected by a parent's mood and the changes in behaviour of other family members. This is a good time to keep a "stiff upper lip" and contain your own depression and frustration to a time when little ones are asleep or otherwise occupied. The preschooler's culture is in the home, where cultural cues come from YOU.

SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN/TEENAGERS

School age children often share the "honeymoon" stage with the parents but will progress to the next stage of culture shock once differences become frustrating. They too are impacted by the atmosphere at home, but less so as they live within a school environment as well.

It is not unusual for teenagers to be initially angry about and rebel against the move. They are more rooted in life with their peers and social life in high school than their younger siblings. You may observe teenagers retreating into their rooms with headphones on as a way of withdrawing from their new environment. However, over time and with appropriate parental support, open communication, and patience, they will soon be bragging to their friends "back home" about their new life in England.

GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS

The good news is that there is an end to family culture shock; the bad news is that the only way past it is to go through it. As a parent, be prepared for a tough six months. The following are suggestions for parents to help ease the way for their children:

- Practice patience, patience, and patience to listen to and communicate with children much more than before.
- Do explain culture shock and its stages to them whatever their age – adults often underestimate children's understanding.
- Make it "safe" for your children to express their anger or other so-called negative feelings so their unhappiness won't be displaced in inappropriate places outside the home (such as acting out in school when before your child had no history of this type of behaviour).

- Be available as much as possible at first. Be careful not to leave your children with a sitter too often until they become used to their new environment and caregivers.
- Do not deny the existence of culture shock. If you are a perfectionist whose ideal does not allow for an adjustment period, then you may set your family up for being "stuck" in a problematic stage of culture shock. Although some children seem to sail through changes, others do not, and denying their sensitivity to these changes could actually prolong the "flight" stage.
- Create as much stability as possible. Routines are important, and as soon as possible establish another family life rhythm. Again, be available to talk to your children about what's new and different in their environment and answer any questions. Do stick with your child-rearing values and be sure to establish a foothold with them from the beginning.
- Do help your children create friendships whenever possible by organising play dates and outings that will bring children together.
- If you feel your child, children, or family are not adjusting to the new environment over a reasonable time period, do not hesitate to find professional help. There is no shame or stigma to seeking outside counselling; often much can be accomplished within relatively few hours with an objective, trained professional. There is no reason you have to unnecessarily experience on-going stress – seek relief! Remember the school counsellors are there to help also.

  Don't expect yourself to be the perfect parent during this time. Do your best, remain flexible, and keep a sense of humour.

IN CONCLUSION

Just remember, you will experience many ups and downs during your time here in the UK – just as you would have done wherever you lived. But by keeping an open mind and developing a willingness to see things not as "bad" or "good" but as "different" – you will find that the positive aspects of expat life can far outweigh any negatives.

You will now be living in a community where everyone has been a newcomer, and they are more than willing to answer your questions, offer advice, and help you and your family settle in to your new life here. Don't be shy about asking questions (no question is stupid or silly), or asking for help. This is the beginning of a new adventure for you and your family – and we wish you every success.

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