



AEGIS welcomes new staff member

Elaine Austin joined AEGIS as a part-time Administration Assistant in mid-October 2015. After studying Environmental Science at Middlesex University, which included Arctic Studies at the University of Lapland, Elaine undertook a Masters degree in Applied Hydrobiology at the University of Wales. After graduating, Elaine worked within the ecological and conservation field for 15 years. She has travelled extensively and undertaken conservation research and voluntary work for a range of organisations. After deciding on a change of career, Elaine started a dog-walking business which she fits in alongside her AEGIS role. She has much project management and administration experience to offer AEGIS, and we are looking forward to working with her.



Arranging Appropriate Insurance - Guardianship Organisations & Homestays

As a responsible guardian, it is your duty to ensure that you are adequately protected against incidents that may arise. In the UK today, claims for negligence, errors and disputes have increased dramatically over the last 10 years. This has been mainly due to a "blame culture" we have adopted from the USA, in which more and more people are looking for a quick way to make money at the misfortune of someone else.

Professional Indemnity Insurance is cover against incorrect advice, errors, omissions, disputes. These can be contract related, negligence or human error. Public Liability Insurance is cover against bodily injury and property damage caused to the 3rd party or their property.

Imagine the situation; a parent books a flight back to China for their child at a cost of £900, it's early in the morning but you miss an alarm and subsequently the child misses the flight. The parents have to rebook a later flight at a greater cost – which also causes the child to miss spending the holidays with their family, creating distress for all parties. As this is an error it would be covered under a professional indemnity policy, rather than the company bank account!

A public liability claim would be as follows: Should a guardian damage an item under ownership of a student, it would be covered under public liability. For example, if the guardian was carrying a laptop belonging to the student, and dropped it down a flight of stairs – this could be replaced under the public liability section of the policy.

Home Insurance - You may not be aware that if you have not declared to your home insurers that you are operating as a homestay, your insurer could refuse to pay a claim should one occur. Much in the same way as you letting a sibling or spouse drive your car, it seems perfectly normal but until you inform your car insurance provider and they have accepted, any accidents that they cause would not be covered under the policy. It would be exactly the same as letting someone else live in your house, the individual might be perfectly well behaved but accidents do happen.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FOCUS

Interview with Nadia Ahmad Rizlan, Malvern St. James Girl's School

Nadia is a Year 13 student who joined in Year 12 at the start of A Level Studies.



Why come to a UK Boarding School?

I wanted to go to a good UK university, and the process is easier if you have attended a UK School. The whole UCAS procedure, and the all-important personal statement, is far better understood in the UK, where the system was created. Friends who have applied from Malaysia direct have had more of a struggle getting through the application. I also felt that coming away for Sixth Form would be excellent preparation for a more independent life at University – both academically and personally.

You are now Deputy Head Girl. How have you achieved this in such a short space of time?

I'm really pleased that I made enough of a mark in my first year to be selected even for a Prefect, let alone become Deputy Head! I always had a plan that I would use every opportunity to get involved and enhance my experience at School – that was part of the reason for coming here.

What has the experience of a UK boarding school brought to you?

I have learnt to become more independent. Academically, I have learnt to work differently. Teaching in the UK is more reflective, rather than being fed facts and churning them out, with teachers interested in knowing my opinion! My experience will be very well-regarded by future employers in Malaysia. British education is seen as the gold-standard, so I am privileged to have experienced it.

Would you recommend it?

Definitely. I have found it fascinating. I have loved the diversity of being in a new culture in the UK, and the friendships I have made with girls from all sorts of backgrounds.

How my Guardianship Organisation, Living Learning English, supported me - former Clifton College Pupil Polina Maloshchinskaia

I felt very nostalgic and homesick during the first week in school but it quickly went away. My guardianship company was absolutely amazing. While flying from Russia to the UK after half-term, I got stuck in Germany for 2 days due to a strike. They managed not only to reschedule my flight but also to find my suitcase which was lost for a month by the airline! My guardians were extremely supportive.

My host family in Bristol was great! They always sent me cards for Christmas, birthday and even good luck cards for exams! I also absolutely loved their cooking.

The Mount School, York

Former students from The Mount School, Dr Eva Alfoldi and Marie-Sophie Reck, re-visited their school and were invited to take the School's Morning Meeting. Dr Alfoldi is now a Lecturer in International Business with the University of Manchester's Business School; and Sophie Reck, a Humanitarian Affairs Officer with the United Nations.

What things did you learn at The Mount which helped you through the initial years of your career?

Eva: Writing essays was so important to my later work. Now I write a lot of social science articles, and all the skills I have acquired for that stems from having studied English Literature at The Mount. The encouragement we got from teachers was so important.

Sophie: The quality of advice we got from the teachers was a big help. Everybody got attention from the teachers. That level of attention allowed me to blossom in things I didn't even know I was good at. We were encouraged to deliver to the best of our abilities, and to have the confidence that if you perform to the maximum of your ability, it will be recognised. My supervisor at the UN valued that work ethic.





Tiffan Guan and fellow St. Joseph's student James Garland pictured after competing in the 2015 Royal Society of Chemistry Olympiad. Tiffan gained a bronze medal and James a silver.

St. Joseph's College, Ipswich, Suffolk

Summer saw some wonderful A level results from a quartet of our Chinese students:

We particularly celebrated the success of **Tiffan Guan**, who was awarded A* grades in Mathematics, Further Maths, Economics and Chemistry and is now studying Economics at University College London. We are also very proud of **Tina Zhao** (Maths A*, Physics A and Further Maths A), now reading Engineering at University College London; **Danny Li** (Maths and Further Maths A*, Chemistry A and Biology B), reading Biomedical Science at King's College London; and **Jude Wang** (Maths and Further Maths A* and Physics B), who is also at King's College, reading Engineering.

An International University

Jess Heaney, Education Outreach Lead Officer,
The University of Leeds

Every year more than 6,000 international students choose to study with us, making our University campus one of the most diverse and multicultural in the UK.

As a Russell Group and top 100 World University, the high standard of our degrees is recognised not only in the UK but worldwide.

Thai mother of a White House Guardianship's student at Hazlegrove

Why did you choose to send Charlie to the UK instead of other countries (US, Canada, Australia)?

I decided to send Charlie to school in England as I felt schooling in England would suit him. Boarding in England has a professional reputation in taking care of children.

Has it helped having a guardian?

By having a guardian it helps a lot due to the good communication between parents, guardian, son and the house parent at school. They take care of my son when he needs something and they are able to help and solve all the problems, such as arrange cars to the airport or to the host family houses.

Top tips for choosing a university:

Research is key:

With so many options available it's important to make an informed decision when it comes to choosing the right course and university. The UCAS website (wwwucas.com) is a great place to start as are university websites, where you can often order prospectuses to be posted to you for free www.unistats.direct.gov.uk and www.thetimeshighereducation.com can also help you to make sense of university rankings and league tables.

Employability:

Competition for graduate jobs increases year on year and to be able to compete you need more than just a degree. At the University of Leeds almost all of our courses offer the opportunity to study abroad or undertake industrial placements; giving our students the skills and experience required to get ahead in the jobs market.

Attend open days:

The best way to decide if a university is the right one for you is to actually visit and see first-hand what the university has to offer. Open days are the perfect opportunity to explore a university's campus, accommodation, facilities and Students' Union.



Why our clients see more clearly now the fog has gone

Lana Foster, along with other AEGIS accredited organisations, continues to promote guardianship and the need for a good guardian. As an AEGIS Publicity Committee member, Lana and the rest of the group get together regularly to discuss this hefty task.

A common response from parents of students who are often initially disappointed by the unexpected extra cost posed by a guardian is ... "but I live so close and my child will be flying home for the holidays, so I don't need a guardian". Whilst we do all we can to urge these parents that there really is a good reason as to why the majority of boarding schools now insist on AEGIS accredited guardians, our efforts are sometimes unsuccessful.

It can take a large scale situation to prove our purpose, such as the recent fog in England and Wales in October 2015 which disrupted UK airports. Thousands of international students travelling back to school after their half term holiday were affected. There is never a good time for fog to strike but for schools and guardians who are responsible for the safety of the students under their care, the timing could not have been worse.

Several of our guardianship students experienced flight cancellations during this incident, with many more diverted and delayed. Three students originally bound for Leeds Bradford were diverted to Edinburgh Airport and arrived safely at school thanks to the quick actions of our guardianship team.

Whilst some students were able to reach school on the day of travel, inevitably there were those who required emergency host family accommodation overnight or those who missed their school's opening hours. Our Accommodation & Travel Managers were able to provide families to cater for these students and drivers to ensure their safe transportation.

Lana Foster, Bright World Education and Guardianships

News

- AEGIS attended the Alpha Secondary Focus Workshop in October 2015, successfully raising awareness of quality guardianship to agents and schools. AEGIS will be attending the workshop again from 30 September - 2 October 2016.

Click here to visit the website 

- AEGIS will be attending the British Boarding Schools Workshop from 3-5 March 2016. We look forward to meeting agents and school representatives there.

Click here to visit the website



- The AEGIS Spring Conference, Thursday 17th March 2016, will take place at the Grand Connaught Rooms, London. Speakers include: Conservative MP Neil Carmichael - The Government's stance on international students; Kalsoom Bashir - Safeguarding children from extremism; Louise Tickle - Media Crisis Management; Nicola Lutz - Q&A session on working with agents; Val Barnes - AEGIS Accreditation Process. Please contact us via info@aegisuk.net for further details. Limited spaces available.
- Eric Needham, one of our independent AEGIS Inspectors, is bidding us farewell. His dedication and commitment to AEGIS has been much appreciated, and we all wish him a long and happy retirement.
- Since our last newsletter, we would like to welcome the following new member schools and colleges: Gresham's School, Tonbridge School, The Mount - Mill Hill International, Mill Hill School, Oswestry School, St. Mary's Shaftesbury, Shrewsbury Sixth Form College, The Royal Hospital School, Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate and Denstone College.
- We would also like to congratulate the following new member Guardianship Organisations for gaining full AEGIS accreditation: Brighter Prospects, Guardians Etc., and Cambridge Guardians Ltd. As well as congratulating Alpha Plus Guardians (one of the founder members of AEGIS), and Pippa's Guardians for successfully gaining AEGIS re-accreditation.

Thank you to all our member Schools and Guardianship Organisations for your continued support.

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