



DWIGHT SCHOOL LONDON

Igniting the spark of genius in every child

PERSONALISED LEARNING · COMMUNITY · GLOBAL VISION

Parent Orientation Booklet

A guide to
moving to London



2019-2020



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Parent Orientation Information

A very warm welcome to Dwight London. This booklet has been developed by parents and staff at the school. We have put together a broad range of information to support both planning for your arrival in London and for the early months when you begin to settle in. We have also included a section entitled "Transitions, what is all the fuss about?", which will help you understand the emotional stress associated with moving overseas. We do hope that it helps.

Our Parent Association enables our families to build friendships and get involved within the school community. To assist our families in having a smooth transition to both the school and London, the Parent Association have set up groups on Classlist. Classlist allows you to tap into the support of the school gate wherever you are. It is an inclusive and secure way to communicate with all parents, it helps parents connect and it allows you to be there for each other! Join your class group on Classlist today.

This app is currently:

- Used by hundreds of thousands of parents, in over 2500 UK schools and 30 countries!
- Used for Parents to share information, exchange help and make family friends on a secure platform built for school communities.
- Recent award-winner at the world's biggest education technology event!

But what can you use Classlist for?

- Find a trusted recommendation. Ask other parents on the Marketplace.
- Meet up & make new friends. Organise a parent meet up or children's playdate, even if you don't know everyone's contact details.
- All the class groups in one place. Parents are automatically added to their class group when they sign up.
- Send free, secure messages to other parents via the app.
- Stay in control of your contact details. You decide exactly which contact details you wish to share.

Classlist is a trusted and safe community which provides a secure platform built for school communities. Every school has its own private site. Parents are verified before they can join and it is entirely GDPR compliant & ICO certified. Make sure you download the app to join our school's Classlist site, we strongly recommend that all new families take advantage of it. If you would like to find out more information, please contact me at dpa@dwightlondon.org.

If you have any ideas about how to make the transition process better do not hesitate to contact Rachel Allman at the school on rallman@dwightlondon.org.

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Angela Bridge
DPA Chair

Part One:
General
Information
about London

A Brief Guide to London

London is the capital and most populous city of England and the United Kingdom. Standing on the River Thames, London has been a major settlement for two millennia, its history going back to its founding by the Romans, who named it Londinium. London's ancient core, the City of London, largely retains its 1.12-square-mile (2.9 km²) medieval boundaries and in 2011 had a resident population of 7,375, making it the smallest city in England. Since at least the 19th century, the term London has also referred to the metropolis developed around this core. The bulk of this conurbation forms the Greater London administrative area governed by the Mayor of London.

London is a leading global city, with strengths in the arts, commerce, education, entertainment, fashion, finance, healthcare, media, professional services, research and development, tourism, and transport all contributing to its prominence. It is one of the world's leading financial centres and has the fifth-or sixth-largest metropolitan area GDP in the world depending on measurement. London is a world cultural capital. It is the world's most-visited city as measured by international arrivals and has the world's largest city airport system measured by passenger traffic. London's 43 universities form the largest concentration of higher education institutes in Europe. In 2012, London became the first city to host the modern Summer Olympic Games three times.

London has a diverse range of peoples and cultures, and more than 300 languages are spoken within Greater London. The region had an official population of 8,416,535 in 2013, the largest of any municipality in the European Union, and accounting for 12.5% of the UK population. London's urban area is the second most populous in the EU, after Paris, with 9,787,426 inhabitants according to the 2011 census. The city's metropolitan area is the one of the most populous in Europe with 13,614,409 inhabitants, while the Greater London Authority puts the population of London metropolitan region at 21 million. London was the world's most populous city from around 1831 to 1925.

London contains four World Heritage Sites: the Tower of London; Kew Gardens; the site comprising the Palace of Westminster, Westminster Abbey, and St Margaret's Church; and the historic settlement of Greenwich (in which the Royal Observatory, Greenwich marks the Prime Meridian, 0° longitude, and GMT). Other famous landmarks include Buckingham Palace, the London Eye, Piccadilly Circus, St Paul's Cathedral, Tower Bridge, Trafalgar Square, and The Shard. London is home to numerous museums, galleries, libraries, sporting events and other cultural institutions, including the British Museum, National Gallery, Tate Modern, British Library and 40 West End theatres. The London Underground is the oldest underground railway network in the world.

<https://earth.esa.int>

Transportation

Transport information for Dwight School London can be found at <http://www.dwightlondon.org/school-life/transport>.

Dwight London Lower School is in North Finchley, very close to Woodside Park tube station on the Northern Line. The Upper School Campuses are in Friern Barnet, approximately 2.2KM from the Lower School, the nearest tube station to the Upper School is Arnos Grove, on the Piccadilly Line. To travel between Upper and Lower School in a car takes less than 10 minutes. If you are using public transport you can take the 234 bus to Whetstone Police Station (approx 5 mins) from outside the Upper School Jubilee building and then walk for approximately 15 minutes. (Continue along Friern Barnet Lane, turn left onto High Road, turn right on to Woodside Lane and then left on to Woodside Avenue.

Public Transport - Buses

London's bus network stretches right across the capital, and provides a frequent and accessible service. If you are using an Oyster card or contactless credit card, a single trip costs £1.50 – you simply 'tap in' when you get on the bus – and there is a daily cap of £4.50 if you're using only bus and tram services. Seven-day, one-month and annual bus passes are also available. To navigate your way around the network, pick up a Central London Bus Guide from travel information centres at larger Tube stations or use Transport for London's online Journey Planner. A reduced service of night buses operates throughout the night, with most routes passing through Trafalgar Square. All children under 16 travel for free, though 5-15 year olds need to show a proof-of-age photo card. Freedom Passes allow disabled and older passengers to travel for free.

Public Transport - Tube

There are 12 Underground or 'Tube' lines serving Greater London, which connect at various points to the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and local rail network. The Tube usually operates from 5am to midnight from Monday to Saturday, with a reduced service on Sunday. The first Night Tube services are now running on the Central, Victoria, Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines. The Night Tube will offer a 24-hour service on Fridays and Saturdays.

<https://tfl.gov.uk/>

Plan your route by picking up a free Tube map from any Underground station, or using Transport for London's online Journey Planner, or apps such as Google Maps or City Mapper. Fares vary depending on which of London's six travel 'zones' you travel through, though they are considerably cheaper with an Oyster card or contactless credit card than buying paper tickets. Various concessions (discounts) are available for children, students, the elderly and disabled travellers.

Public Transport - Docklands Light Railway

The Docklands Light Railway (DLR) serves East London and connects with the Tube network at Bank, Tower Gateway (Tower Hill), Shadwell, Stratford, Bow, Heron Quays, Canning Town and Canary Wharf. It also connects to the Emirates Air Line cable car at Royal Victoria. Fares are the same as on the Tube, and the DLR runs from 5.30am to 12.30am Monday to Saturday and from 7am to 11.30pm on Sunday. Fares are the same as those on the Tube, and Oyster and Travelcard holders can use the DLR.

Public Transport - Thames River Bus

There are six different routes, which start at destinations along the riverbank – between Putney and Woolwich Arsenal. Popular services include Thames Clippers route between Hilton London Docklands Riverside and Canary Wharf, the Tate to Tate boat between Tate Britain and Tate Modern, and the journey between London Eye and historic Greenwich. Buy your ticket before boarding or on board (depending on the service) – discounts are available with Travelcards and Oyster cards.

Public Transport - Local Trains

As well as the Underground, London has its own local train network, which connects to the Tube at many points. The main train operators serving London are Silverlink, First Capital Connect, South Eastern Railway, Southern Railway, London Overground and Greater Anglia, with these local lines in turn linking to the national rail network and the Eurostar. You can use your Oyster card on all suburban trains stopping in Zones 1-9 – except Heathrow Express and a few other select services. Several different railcards are available too, providing discounted fares to their holders.

Public Transport - Trams

London's tram network, Tramlink, was introduced in 2000 and runs in selected parts of South London – between Wimbledon, Croydon, Beckenham and New Addington. Trams run about every seven minutes to New Addington and every 10 minutes to Wimbledon, Elmers End and Beckenham Junction during the day from Monday to Saturday. Fares work the same as on buses,

with a flat-rate cost of £1.50 with an Oyster card or contactless credit card. Travelcards are also valid on trams, and bus passes include use of the tram network. Travelling via Tramlink is free for London students aged 16-17, under 16s and older and disabled residents carrying a relevant photo card.

Public Transport - Cycle Hire Scheme

Hop on a “Santander Cycle” and zip around London using the city’s public bike-sharing scheme. The popular red bikes can be found in more than 550 bike docking stations across London – so you’re never far away from one. After you’ve paid your registration fee (from £2), you can hire a bike for a day, week or even a year. The bikes are free to use for the first 30 minutes, with prices increasing according to how long you use the bike for then afterwards. When you’ve finished your journey, simply return the bike to your nearest docking station – you can find out where that is on the TFL website here: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/cycling/santander-cycles/find-a-docking-station>

Public Transport - Emirates Air Line

Cross the Thames in style on board the Emirates Air Line, London’s cable car connecting Greenwich Peninsula and the Royal Docks. As well as taking you across the river in less than 10 minutes, it provides an amazing bird’s eye view over London and the Thames. The fare is £3.50 using Oyster pay-as-you-go, or you can buy a return journey (known as a ‘360° tour’) for £8.40 from the terminals at either end of the line. Multi-journey boarding passes (£17 for 10 single trips) and private cabin packages are also available.

Taxi

Riding in one of London’s iconic black cabs is a must – and makes for a very comfortable and spacious ride. Hail a cab in the street or pick one up at a taxi rank. Your journey is calculated using a meter, with a minimum charge of £2.60. London also has many private hire vehicles and minicabs – these are unmetered so check the fare when booking. To find a local, reputable firm download Transport for London’s free CabWise app or text CAB to 60835 to receive three numbers (two minicab and one black cab) by text. The Hailo smartphone app is another great way to find a black cab near you and the Uber smartphone app can be used to find local minicabs. Mini cabs should only be taken if booked in advance and for safety do not get into a mini cab car unless it is prebooked. Mini cabs are recognised by the license sticker on the front screen.

Zipcar and Enterprise Car Club

A Zipcar or Enterprise Car Club car sharing membership gives you wheels when you need them without the hassle or costs associated with car rental or ownership. Your car sharing membership includes fuel, insurance and congestion charges. Cars can be found in convenient locations around where you live, work or play. For more details go to www.zipcar.co.uk or www.enterpriseclub.co.uk/



Driving in the UK.

Many foreign driving licences permit one to drive in the UK, but must be exchanged for British licences after a year. Drivers from the USA, however, must take a British test if they wish to drive in the UK for more than a year after arriving in the country. Driving licences from the European Union, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland are valid in the United Kingdom.

<https://www.gov.uk/driving-nongb-licence>

<https://www.gov.uk/exchange-foreign-driving-licence>

Congestion charge.

You have to pay an £11.50 daily charge if you drive between 07:00 and 18:00, Monday to Friday in the Congestion Charge zone.

There is no charge on weekends, public holidays, between Christmas Day and New Year's Day inclusive, or between 18:00 and 07:00 on weekdays. More information can be found on the following website:

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/congestion-charge/congestion-charge-zone>

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/congestion-charge-zone-map.pdf>

Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)

To help improve air quality, an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) now operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year within the same area of central London as the Congestion Charge. Most vehicles, including cars and vans, need to meet the ULEZ emissions standards or their drivers must pay a daily charge to drive within the zone. This is a £12.50 charge for most vehicles (car, van or motorcycle). For more information, visit the TFL website here <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/ultra-low-emission-zone>.

Weather

The general perception of London weather being eternally wet and grey is actually not deserved. While London weather is unpredictable, the average annual rainfall is not especially high, and the city is generally warmer temperature-wise than the rest of the UK.

London, in common with the rest of England, has a temperate maritime climate, meaning that while the seasons are well-defined, temperatures do not run to extremes. The thermometer rarely reaches freezing point in mid- winter (December and January) and the height of summer (July and August) offers some balmy days with pleasant temperatures averaging 22°C. The main feature of London's climate, however, is that nothing can be taken for granted – heat waves and cold spells can sneak up on you any time of year. Up to date weather information can be found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/2643743>.

Language

London is a very diverse city and more than 100 different languages are spoken in virtually every borough.

There are many ways to learn English, through local classes, private lessons, online and via smartphone and tablet Apps such as Duolingo. The Apple iTunes Store has a wealth of resources, some free, for iPhones, iPods/Pads, or Macs and the British Council also have a website dedicated to learning English: <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/>.

There are many local programme models offered by higher education institutions and local authorities. Always look out for ARELS certified programmes. More information can be found at <http://www.englishforum.com/00/schools/orgs/arels.html>.

Public Holidays

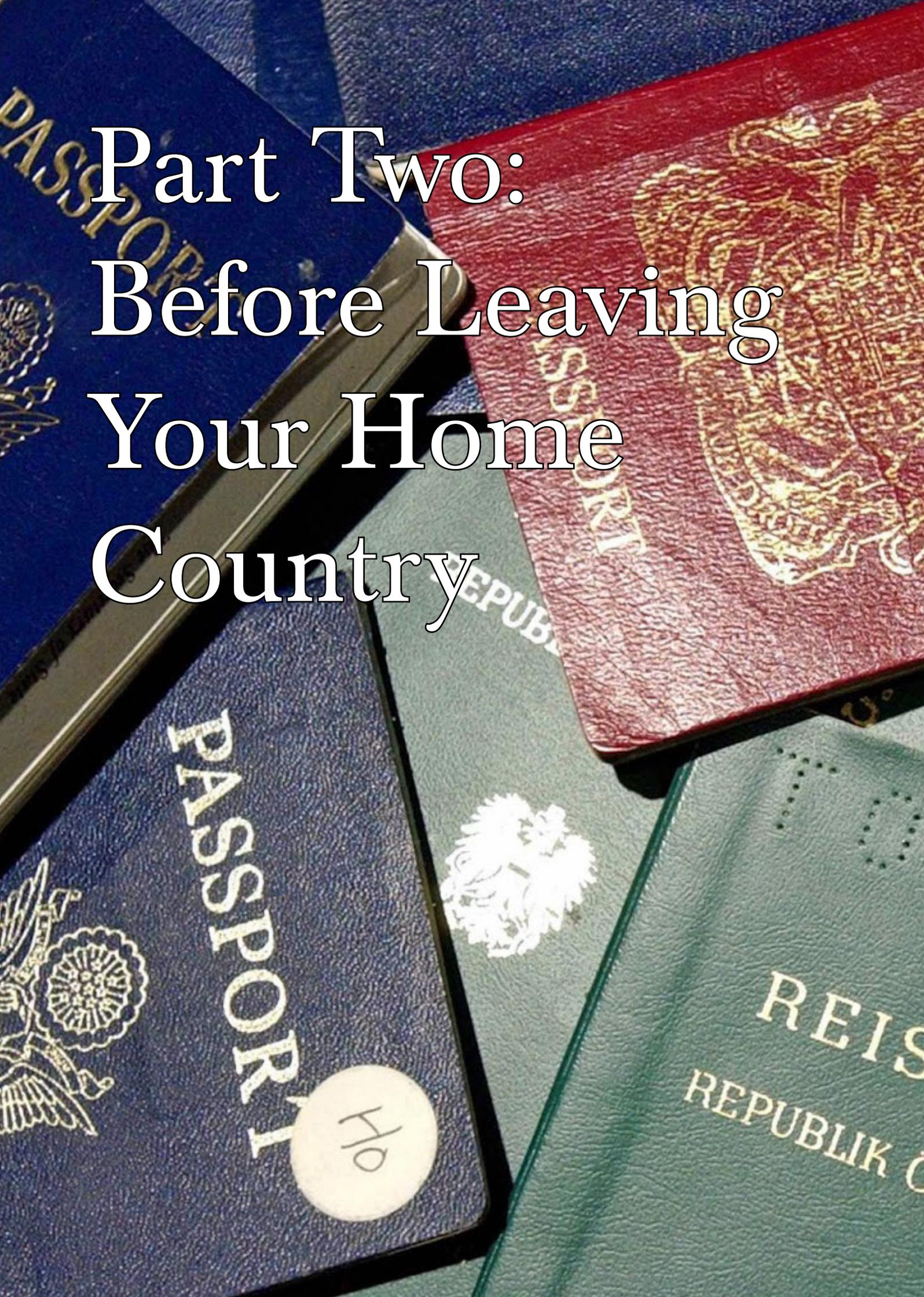
Public holidays for 2019/20 include:

Monday, 26th August 2019	Summer bank holiday
Wednesday, 25th December 2019	Christmas Day
Thursday, 26th December 2019	Boxing Day
Wednesday, 1st January 2020	New Year's Day
Friday, 10th April 2020	Good Friday
Monday, 13th April 2020	Easter Monday
Monday, 4th May 2020	Early May bank holiday
Monday, 25th May 2020	Spring bank holiday
Monday, 31st August	Summer bank holiday
Friday, 25th December 2020	Christmas Day
Monday, 28th December 2020	Boxing Day (substitute day)*

*If a bank holiday is on a weekend, a 'substitute' weekday becomes a bank holiday, normally the following Monday.

<https://www.gov.uk/bank-holidays>





Part Two:
Before Leaving
Your Home
Country

PASSPORT

H/O

REIS
REPUBLIK C

Visas

Who needs a visa? How do you apply for one?

The UK has very tough immigration laws, which are enforced. Before travelling, make sure you have all the required visas and documentation or you will be refused entry. This section is intended to give you an overview of what documentation you may need.

If you are not a British citizen you might need entry clearance (that is permission) to enter the UK. The Home Office currently has three categories based on entry requirements:

- European Economic Area Citizens: Do not need entry clearance to enter the UK. The European Economic Area (EEA) includes all EU countries plus Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland. Swiss nationals also fall under this category.
- Non-Visa Nationals: Only require an entry certificate when going to the UK to work or to settle. This category primarily consists of Commonwealth citizens.
- Visa Nationals: Need a visa to enter the UK for any reason.

You will also need a visa if you:

- are stateless (you do not have a nationality)
- hold a non-national travel document (a travel document which does not give you the nationality or citizenship of the country that issued it)
- hold a passport issued by an authority unrecognised in the UK.

Nationals of the following 10 countries now need to apply for an appropriate visa when staying in the UK longer than six months: Australia, Canada, Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea and the USA. (Note that students here on a tourist visa are not normally able to join Dwight School London.)

You can find out what type of entry clearance you need based on your nationality, purpose of the visit and country location, by going to the Foreign Office page, <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa>.

Tourist visas are issued for a maximum stay of six months. If you require a visa and wish to remain in the UK longer than six months, you must leave the country and apply for a new visa. If you wish to leave and return to the UK within the duration of your visa, it will save you a lot of trouble if you apply for a multiple-entry visa. If you only have a single-entry visa you will have to apply for a new visa each time you leave the country.

Where to apply for a United Kingdom visa?

Visas and other forms of entry clearance (such as an entry certificate) for England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland need to be obtained prior to your arrival in Great Britain. If you require a visa there is no way to make an application on arrival and the likelihood is that you will be refused entry to the United Kingdom.

Applications for entry into the UK should be made at any British Diplomatic Post in your country of residence (to find the address and phone number of the one nearest to you click here).

How to apply for a UK visa?

You will always need at least the following documents:

- a visa application form (you can obtain it for free at your nearest British mission overseas or you can download it from www.ukvisas.gov.uk)
- a valid passport or travel document
- two (sometimes three) recent passport-sized (45mm x 35mm), colour photographs
- the visa fee (which will be paid for in local currency)

- the supporting documents required for the visa category you are applying for.

Supporting documents may include:

- a work permit
- a letter of acceptance from a university
- evidence of your qualifications: i.e. diplomas, certificates, references
- evidence that you will be able to support yourself and your dependants during your stay in the UK, i.e. bank statements, a letter from your bank.

Although straightforward visa applications can be processed within 24 hours, this is not always the case. It is recommended that you allow ample time for your application to be processed, if you are concerned about arriving in the UK for a specific date.

If you are denied a visa you will be notified in writing of the refusal and the reasons for it. In certain cases you will have the right to appeal the decision and as such will be given advice on how to do so. Instead of appealing you can simply apply again, but if the reasons for the initial refusal still apply, your application will probably be turned down again.

Flights

The metropolitan area of London, England is served by six international airports and several smaller airports. Dwight parents may wish to look into international flights available from Luton, Stansted and City Airports for convenience.

International Airports

- Heathrow
- Gatwick
- Stansted
- Luton
- London City
- Southend

There are currently 14 domestic destinations served by the airports and 396 international destinations.

Shipping Goods to London

The school does not recommend any one particular shipping company. It is essential that the service you do select is door-to-door and that the contact details for the shipping company's office in the United Kingdom are known.

Our staff and parents have used the following companies in the past:

Allied Pickfords:	www.alliedtoallied.com
Crown Relocations:	www.crownrelo.com/web/relo.nsf/index.htm
Eurasia:	http://www.en.eurasia-intl.com
Links Relocation:	www.linksrelo.com
Seven Seas:	www.sevenseasworldwide.com
Santa Fe:	http://www.santaferelo.com
Diplomatic Transshipment Services	www.dts-lgw.com

Customs and Import Tax

You have tax and customs responsibilities when you move your personal belongings to the UK from abroad.

You must follow the rules on:

- banned and restricted goods
- food, plants and animals
- vehicles and boats
- arriving with goods or cash
- goods sent by post or courier

You must pay Excise Duty if you ship alcohol or tobacco.

For full details on customs and import tax go to <https://www.gov.uk/moving-to-uk>

Baggage

Baggage Allowance: baggage allowances will differ according to the airline and ticket class, so please check before you fly.

Pets

You can bring your dog, cat or ferret into the UK without quarantine as long as they meet the rules of the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS). Full details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/take-pet-abroad..>

Mail/Posting

Postage stamps are available across London from post offices, newsagents and supermarkets. To post a package, drop into any post-office – you can find your nearest branch on the Post Office website <http://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder>. Post offices are generally open Monday-Friday from 9.00am to 5.30pm and Saturday from 9.00am to 12.30pm and sub-post offices can be found within shops.

There are also express mail services available, including DHL, Federal Express and UPS.

What to Bring

Most items can easily be found in London, though you may not find the brands you are used to.

The most important things to have with you are your personal documentation (birth certificates, marriage certificates, vaccination records etc), these should be kept with you when you fly to London – not put in your relocation shipment.

If you have a special need or have questions, please contact the Parent Buddy Coordinator ambassadors@dwightlondon.org who will be more than happy to help you.

Part Three: Settling In



Health

The United Kingdom's National Health Service (NHS) is recognised as one of the world's leading health services. All expats in the UK are entitled to free emergency treatment at all National Health Service (NHS) hospitals, but some expats will be liable to pay for in-patient treatment and dental work, depending on where they are from. The UK has negotiated reciprocal healthcare agreements with a range of foreign countries, including Australia, New Zealand and members of the EU, meaning citizens are exempt from healthcare payments.

Expats looking to take advantage of the NHS should be prepared for long waits and hard-to-get appointments.

Private hospitals in the UK tend to specialise in a particular type of care. The service at a private hospital tends to be better and patients will be seen much quicker. However, the cost of treatment at private hospitals tends to be pretty high, so unless they have health insurance most people avoid going to private hospitals, if possible.

Using the National Health Service (NHS) as an expat in the UK

Although emergency hospital treatment is generally free for anyone visiting the UK, expats moving here must register for an NHS Number in order to make an appointment with a General Practitioner (GP) or dentist. GPs are the first point of contact for most people and can refer patients to other specialist NHS services.

In order to register for an NHS number, expats must make an appointment, sit for an interview and fill out the necessary paperwork. They will then be assigned an NHS number, which will arrive in the post within a couple of weeks. When an expat receives this piece of information, they can register at a local GP's surgery.

Once registered expats either apply for a same-day appointment by calling at 8am in the morning, which is rarely successful, alternatively one can call and book an appointment for a date in the future. Technically it is possible to demand to be seen within 48 hours but most likely the appointment will be in about a week. It is important to note that the long waiting lists are for doctor's appointments; in the case of an emergency the NHS does treat patients speedily and efficiently. Please note that doctors appointments are set at 15 minutes, therefore you may need more than one appointment.

Those who register with their local NHS dentist get a 25 percent discount off dental treatment.

Private healthcare in the UK

Private hospitals are plentiful and located throughout the country. However, some of the country's best specialists are located on Harley Street in central London.

Private healthcare and dental care in the UK can be expensive but do guarantee preferential treatment and, crucially, freedom from the long waiting lists that many NHS patients complain about.

Many health insurance providers also offer international coverage for when expats travel back to their home country, or when travelling overseas in general.

With the range of health insurance products on offer it is best to do a fair amount of research and comparison in order to find the best policy to suit each individual's healthcare needs.

Medicines and pharmacies in the UK

Pharmacies, or chemists as they are more commonly referred to in the UK, can be found on all major high streets and in shopping centres, look out for a green + sign.

Most medicines are easily available. If a certain type of medication is not available, pharmacies in most UK cities can have it ordered in within 24 to 48 hours. For certain types of medicine one will need a prescription from a GP, while others are available over the counter.

Expats will often find a pharmacy located close to a GP's surgery or hospital. Independent pharmacies are fast disappearing in the UK and being taken over by chains such as Boots and Superdrug, which sell beauty goods alongside health and medical products.

Many pharmacies in the UK stay open till midnight, some are open 24 hours. <http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Pharmacy/LocationSearch/10>

Health Insurance in the UK

Employers in the UK are not obligated by law to provide medical insurance to their employees. While some employers might make contributions towards private healthcare, in most cases expats will need to pay for their own health insurance.

International health insurance providers like Axa PPP, Bupa and Allianz provide a number of options to suit the various needs of expats moving to the UK.

Pre-travel restrictions and vaccinations for the UK

No special vaccinations are required for expats moving to the UK. However, these routine vaccinations are recommended:

- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)
- Tetanus
- Diphtheria
- Hepatitis B

Emergency medical services in the UK

Emergency medical services in the UK are provided free to all and provide immediate care to people with acute illnesses or injuries.

Emergency calls should be made to 999. The operator will then dispatch an ambulance to the location of the incident. Alternatively one can call 111 when medical help is needed fast but it is not a 999 emergency. If it is less critical, expats can make their own way to the nearest hospital with an accident and emergency unit for immediate treatment.

European Health Insurance Card

An EHIC will currently enable you to access state-provided healthcare in European Economic Area (EEA) countries, including Switzerland, at a reduced cost, or sometimes for free. It will cover your treatment until you return to the UK. It also covers treatment of pre-existing medical conditions and routine maternity care, providing the reason for your visit is not specifically to give birth. More details can be found at <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/Pages/about-the-ehic.aspx>.

Housing

The bustling London metropolis has accommodation options to suit every budget, lifestyle and background.

There are areas and suburbs of London that are perfect for the young professional, families, students, art and culture lovers and hi-flying business executives.

London is a great cosmopolitan city and expats will have the opportunity to mix with people from all over the globe. Many expats choose to live in areas which are populated with fellow citizens of their own country.

Thanks to London's excellent public transport network, getting around the city from wherever a person chooses to live won't be too much of a problem; although some areas are better serviced than others.

The majority of expats moving to London opt to rent property rather than buy it. Many of those relocating to the city to take up a job offer will find that their employer will find them a suitable rental property. Expats looking to settle in the United Kingdom can opt to buy property, but house prices in the city are amongst some of the highest in the world.

Expats wishing to experience the true essence of city life in London by living close to the city centre will find that space comes at a premium. Apartments located in areas closer to London's city centre will find that accommodation size is generally very small. Those willing to live further away from the city centre and commute to work will find that they can find more spacious accommodation.

A positive consequence of the recent economic crisis is that London rentals and house prices have dropped marginally, particularly for those paying in a foreign currency. Both rental prices and house prices vary enormously depending on the location within London. Check out local estate agency websites for an idea of costs or contact a relocation agency.

Finding suitable accommodation in London is not easy and expats are advised to do some research and in fact start the search before leaving their home country. New arrivals find it very useful to enlist the professional services of an estate agent who is familiar with the property market in the particular area or suburb of London that an individual is interested in. The major advantage of liaising with agents is that they often have access to properties that are yet to make it onto public listings.

Many Dwight families live in East Finchley, Finchley Central, Islington, Highgate, Muswell Hill, North Finchley, Totteridge and Whetstone, Hampstead, West Hampstead, Hendon, Maida Vale, Kilburn, Mill Hill, St. John's Wood, Golders Green, Southgate and Barnet.

Muswell Hill:

- Beautiful houses – many of the houses in Muswell Hill are large Victorian homes, with their classic red brick exterior that looks simply stunning
- Great views – you can go to Alexandra Park and take in the views of the City of London and the Olympic Park, or just stand at the top of Hillside Gardens (on the Broadway) and you'll have the whole city in front of you.
- The shops – Muswell Hill Broadway has some great chain stores that you will find on many shopping streets in Britain, but it also has some amazing independent shops, including Martyn's, a traditional shop that has been owned by the same family for over 100 years, and sells traditional tea and coffee.
- The cafés, restaurants and bars – if you are meeting a friend for a meal or a drink, Muswell Hill has some great places to choose from, including Toff's (voted the UK's best Fish & Chip restaurant), and a Miller and Carter's.
- Everyman Cinema: <https://www.everymancinema.com>
- Great transport links – when people discover that Muswell Hill does not have an underground station, they assume it must be hard to get here. Not at all! With regular buses taking you the short distance to Highgate station (Northern Line) and Finsbury Park (Piccadilly and Victoria Line), they have London in the palm of their hand!
- Friendly people – 'Muswell Hillbillies' are a friendly bunch, ready and waiting to welcome you to their little corner of London!

<http://www.excelenglish.co.uk/2013/03/5-best-places-to-live-in-london/>

Finchley:

Separately into four areas; East Finchley, West Finchley, Finchley Central and North Finchley. All areas differ in terms of local amenities and price with East Finchley being the most affluent.

Finchley overview - What's it all about?

Finchley residents enjoy a calm and soothing environment made up of quiet leafy streets lined and picturesque period homes. Its well positioned location allows access to several beautiful woodlands, a far cry from the landscaped parks of central London. Finchley is the perfect location for those who commute by car, as several major roads pass through the area, linking to the M1 for quick access to the northwest of England, the A1(M) which heads to Hertfordshire and the north, and North Circular orbital leading to the M40, M4 and west of England. Even those who don't drive are rarely short of transport options, as the area is served by the Northern Line and is the nexus of many bus routes.

Finchley has attracted artistic and intellectual luminaries for centuries, with such diverse talents as Charles Darwin and Spike Milligan writing some of their greatest works from secluded homes in Finchley. It is as popular as ever with the people working in the arts, but Finchley residents are an increasingly mixed bunch, varying from families who are looking to join a stable community to young singles and professional couples who come both to rent and buy. The area also attracts older couples who have sold their family homes and downscaled to the area's luxury flats. There is also a strong Jewish community with a number of synagogues and a cultural centre in the area.

Fact file

- Finchley was Margaret Thatcher's parliamentary constituency between 1959 and 1992.
- Historically St Pancras and Islington Cemetery is one of London's most important burial grounds. It's poignant mix of old and new graves also make it one of the most beguiling, and several parts are Grade II listed. Henry Croft, the Capital's first Pearly King, is buried here.
- Draughtsman Harry Beck, who came up with the original version of the iconic Tube map in 1931, lived in Finchley. A copy of which can be found alongside a plaque on the southbound platform of Finchley Central Tube station.

Architecture and property

- Property in Finchley is remarkably diverse, encompassing a huge range of architectural styles, from the grand houses of Hampstead Garden Suburb to the more modest terraces in West Finchley. Nowhere is this diversity more prominent than in East Finchley, where multi million pound mansions on The Bishop's Avenue are just around the corner from three incongruous 11 storey blocks of flats on Prospect Ring. Built to replace the area's cottages after they were severely damaged in World War II, today they are highly sought after. Large Victorian and Edwardian homes line the streets of Central Finchley, while 1920s and 1930s properties dominate in West Finchley.

Going out

Eating: Finchley is a centre of culinary delights with restaurants serving food from every region and culture, and it's never difficult to find a kosher or halal eatery. A perfect example of the area's unique and diverse dining scene is La'zeez on North Finchley's busy High Road, a vegetarian restaurant with an Indo Oriental concept. Meat eaters love the chicken dansak at Bengal Bertie's, while the Greek Genzo is regularly named one of the best restaurants in East Finchley. For more traditional British fare, try the Two Brothersfish restaurant. The Old White Lion pub is perfect for a pint or two after a walk on Hampstead Heath, offering a selection of real ales as well as excellent pub grub. In summer, the garden at gastropub The Bald Faced Stag is filled with locals.

Arts: Artsdepot on Tally Ho Corner is a multi purpose community arts centre, comprising theatre spaces, dance and drama studios, gallery and cafe. JW3 on Finchley Road is London's pre eminent Jewish community centre and arts venue, offering a busy schedule of film screenings, exhibitions, performances, talks and classes.

Cinema: The Phoenix Cinema is one of the oldest purpose built cinemas in the UK and plays a mix of new releases, classic and arthouse films. Uniquely, it is run by a charitable trust for the community that saved the cinema from closure in 1985.

Local amenities

- For shopping, locals make for the High Road and Ballards Lane, which are packed full of high street shops, locally owned boutiques, specialist food stores and supermarkets. Branches of Waitrose, Aldi and Sainsbury's are all located around the junction of these roads. For serious retail therapy, the vast Brent Cross shopping centre is only a 10 minute drive away.
- Finchley's location on the northernmost edge of London grants it great access to several golf clubs, including the Mill Hill Golf Club and Metro Golf Centre. If you're looking for a challenge head to the local Finchley Golf Club, deemed to be one of the trickiest courses in London
- The area has several gyms and leisure centres, as well as excellent yoga studios like The Iyengar Yoga Studio. Finchley Lido Leisure Centre has two swimming pools, indoor and outdoor sporting facilities, a sauna and a dance studio. There is also a David Lloyd gym in North Finchley.
- Opposite East Finchley's award winning allotments lies the public library, situated in a beautiful Art Deco listed building. It is a cornerstone of the community and is supported by the East Finchley Library Users Group.
- Car parks are much more easily located in Finchley than in many other areas of London, some of which are free. Both East Finchley and Finchley Central station have car parks.

Green spaces

While much of Finchley retains an urban feel, its surrounding areas have some of the most picturesque green spaces in London, many of which are just a short drive away. To the north west, Mill Hill Park has sports and recreation facilities, while to the south lie leafy Highgate Wood and Hampstead's beautiful Kenwood House, a branch of the Victoria and Albert Museum with its charming cafe. For those who don't want to travel, Finchley boasts several of its own smaller parks such as Coldfall Woods, Cherry Tree Wood and Woodside Park. Victoria Park is a favourite for families, with play areas for children and a lovely cafe.

Changing times

Finchley has benefited from a swathe of new property developments in recent years, with apartments and homes being built to suit individuals and families of all sizes. A development at Imperial Square has a selection of impressive homes.

Transport

Tube: Finchley has four Underground stations, all on the High Barnet branch of the Northern Line. East Finchley is in Zone 3, and Finchley Central, West Finchley, and Woodside Park are in Zone 4.

Bus: Several routes run through the area to all corners of North London, as well as the West End. Tally Ho Corner is a particularly busy hub. There are also two night buses: N13 (to Aldwych) and N20 (to Trafalgar Square).

Road: Henlys Corner marks the junction between the A1 and the North Circular (A406), and from which the M1 is six minutes away.

Cycle: Enjoy the downhill cycle into central London. It's possible to reach London Bridge in under an hour, but be prepared for the uphill return journey.

<https://www.kfh.co.uk/north-london/finchley/>

Mill Hill

- Mill Hill is located in North-West London in the borough of Barnet.
- The retail hub in the area is centred around Mill Hill Broadway – it contains a variety of high street shops such as M&S, Boots and WHSmiths.
- This is also where you'll find the pubs, wine bars and restaurants.
- For supermarkets, there isn't a lot of choice, but there is a Waitrose supermarket located in Mill Hill East.
- For open spaces in Mill Hill, you have the choice of Scratchwood (a 55 hectare wooded country park) or Mill Hill Park.
- Gym: Virgin Active
- Looking at transport, the tube is on the Northern line and you can catch trains into St Pancras from Mill Hill Broadway. There are also plenty of bus routes.

Totteridge and Whetstone

Totteridge has a certain rural charm, with its big houses overlooking the common, its fish ponds, the village green, and pretty woods for weekend walks.

Indeed, Totteridge feels like serious countryside, even though it is only 10 miles from central London, which is perhaps why it attracts the stuffed wallets of wealthy City chiefs. The most expensive house here will leave you no change from £30 million.

Totteridge has a strong country feel with big houses and pretty woods, despite being only 10 miles from central London

This well-heeled suburb lies on a high ridge between two of the capital's lesser-known natural waterways, the Dollis Brook and a tributary, the Folly Brook. It owes its rural feel and sylvan setting to the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, which limited London's urban expansion by placing an invincible belt of greenery around the city, to Totteridge's lasting benefit.

Shops and restaurants: Totteridge itself doesn't have any shops, except for a farm shop which is only open on Saturdays. The Orange Tree is a popular gastropub, and there are plenty of shops, cafés and restaurants in nearby Whetstone, including a large Waitrose and Marks and Spencers Food Store. There is also a Sainsbury's a short distance away.

Whetstone High Road, north of The Griffin pub, is a pleasant tree-line boulevard with places to sit out and watch the world go by. The Haven is a popular local bistro which puts on jazz nights.

Open space: Totteridge is all about open space, ideal for walking, cycling, horse riding and golf. The Dollis Valley Greenwalk is a 10-mile waymarked walk starting in Mill Hill and ending in Hampstead Garden Suburb, passing through Totteridge on its way.

Barnet

The main attraction of the north London suburb of Barnet is that it has one foot in the town, the other in the countryside. From bustling Barnet High Street it is but a short walk to the open heathland of Hadley Common with its duck ponds and hilltop views, and the rural delights of Monken Hadley. There, the picturesque little church of St Mary the Virgin is a favourite wedding venue, and motorists politely give way to oncoming traffic passing through the gap in a white picket fence.

Barnet is 11 miles almost due north of central London. It sits west of Cockfosters, east of Arkley and Borehamwood, north of Totteridge and Whetstone and south of the M25 and the Hertfordshire countryside.

There is an Everyman Cinema in Barnet and a Nutfields Gym in Friern Barnet.

Types of accommodation

Accommodation in the UK is generally divided into the following classifications:

- Houses (detached, semi-detached, terraced)
- Bungalows (houses with one storey only - these are found particularly in coastal areas)
- Flats (or apartments)
- Maisonettes (flats with more than one storey)
- Bedsits (one-room apartments/studios)

All these forms of housing are widespread, with flats, maisonettes and bedsits predominating in the more urban areas.

<http://www.totteridgelocksmiths.co.uk/page26.htm>

Renting property

Finding a place to rent in London is a straightforward process, though it can be made more difficult by the speed at which the market moves. Expats should be prepared to move quickly when they see a place they like, as the competition for good-value rentals can be cut-throat. In some cases, it may even be necessary to commit to the property during the initial viewing. Usually, a 'holding deposit' (equivalent of one week's rent) will be enough to secure the property while the rental agreement is sorted out.

As far as finding a place to rent goes, expats can look into one (or more) of the following options:

- Local newspapers and magazines carry private listings – tenants will be able to call the owner or landlord directly to arrange a viewing
- Websites and internet property portals regularly publish rental adverts.
- Real estate agents are a dependable source of information and help when it comes to looking for a place to rent – though they will charge a fee for their services should one arrange a rental agreement through them. Bear in mind, also, that UK real estate agencies do not share their listings with each other – so check all the agencies in the area, to ensure one finds the best deal. Expats are urged to check the National Approved Letting Scheme's website for a list of approved agencies and landlords.

Lease agreements in the UK are generally signed on a six-month or one-year basis, with an option to renew the lease should the tenant desire to do so. A 'six month break clause' can be negotiated for 12-month leases, allowing the tenant to back out of the full term after giving 30 or 60 days notice. Expats must be wary of this clause, however, as it cuts both ways – and since rental prices are attached to market prices in the UK, should these fluctuate, the landlord might look to break the rental agreement early, and get new tenants in, to charge them a higher monthly fee.

Note that expats will also be required to provide up to twelve weeks' worth of rent as a deposit, and letters of reference from their employer and previous landlords to secure a rental agreement. Tenants will also certainly be liable for their own gas, electricity, water, phone, Internet and council tax bills while renting in the UK.

Relocation Services - many families being relocated to the UK by their companies will have the services of relocation companies. Be sure to check with your corporate HR department/Global Mobility advisor before you start your own property search. For families who do not have the benefit of corporate relocation support, contact the Admissions Director for an introduction to a local independent agent.

Buying property

Foreigners looking to buy property in the UK will need to broker the services of a reliable estate agent. The estate agent will assist the buyer in finding a suitable property by providing valuation and surveying services – services which are provided to prospective buyers for free.

Once the buyer finds a likely property, the estate agent can also help with conveyancing (though some buyers prefer to enlist the services of a property lawyer to handle this side of things). Mortgages can be sought through any bank or building society – provided, of course, that expats are able to supply them with the appropriate documentation (evidence of earnings, letters of reference, etc.).

A final note, is that – in the UK – properties are classified either as freehold or leasehold. The vast majority of properties are classified as freehold. The difference between the two is that if one purchases a freehold property in the UK, they own it outright; while if expats purchase a leasehold property, they only own it for the amount of time stipulated on the lease (usually 999 years).

Utilities

Great Britain has 230-volt/50 cycle electricity. You will need a transformer for 110-volt appliances. You may wish to check items are compatible before you bring the.

When contacting a utility company expats need to have the information necessary to satisfy the following points:

- Name of former account holder to change the account of the property onto the name of the new owner
- The moving-in date
- Bank details to set up direct debit payments
- The address to where correspondence will be posted
- Recent meter readings for gas & electricity
- The number of people living at the property to inform the Council Tax office. People living alone usually get a 25 percent discount. Full time students are exempt from paying council tax

TV Licence

Accounts can be set up online: <http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk>. This is a requirement in the UK.

Council Tax

Your estate agent or landlord should inform you about the local council.

Water

The estate agent or landlord should inform you of the current supplier.

Gas

The estate agent or landlord should inform you of the current supplier. If not the 'M Number Enquiry Line' (formerly Transco) will be able to establish who the current registered gas supplier at the property is. The M Number Enquiry Line number is 0870 608 1524.

Electricity

The estate agent or landlord should inform you of the current supplier. If not, it is possible to find out who the supplier is by contacting the local electricity distribution company. Ask for their Meter Point Administration Service (MPAS).

Do bear in mind that one does not have to stay with existing utility providers. It is a good idea to look around for the best deals before setting up utility accounts. There are quite a few websites that help consumers compare different energy supplier prices in an area. One such comparison site is To find out the most competitive supplier in your area you can use a comparison site such as <http://www.moneysupermarket.com/gas-and-electricity/>.

Home insurance

Home insurance is not essential but you should consider it as properties attract a lot of attention when new people move in. There are many packages available to suit an individual's requirements. Packages can also be compared on the comparison websites. <http://www.moneysupermarket.com/insurance/>

Telephone

BT is the national company for telephone lines and runs the telephone network. Some people may not want a landline especially if they are planning on only using a mobile phone. However, a person will have to have a landline if they would like ADSL Broadband in their home, so will still need to go through the motions of setting up a landline.

An engineer will have to come out to the property to install the landline if it is a new build or reactivate the landline if there is already a BT line installed. BT will give customers a time slot of between 8am to 5pm on the day of the installation. Someone will need to be waiting at the property during this period. Sometimes it's not necessary for the engineer to visit the property and BT can reactivate a landline from their control centre. There are other providers that have good telephone packages available depending on your requirements, for example Sky and TalkTalk.

Cheap international phone calls

There are many providers supplying cheap phone calls abroad to suit various requirements. For example, you can set up a 1899 account which can be used from A BT phone line. Another alternative is to use a free internet video service such as Skype, <http://www.skype.com/en/>.

Broadband

Setting up broadband can be a slow and frustrating business, and it is often necessary to deal with several departments of the relevant broadband provider to organise set-up. If expats need immediate access to the internet during the set-up process they can reduce the inconvenience by:

- Purchasing a mobile broadband dongle on a pay-as-you-go programme, which can be bought from most mobile phone shops
- Setting up all of communication accounts at once - telephone, Broadband and television

ADSL broadband

ADSL broadband is by far the most popular choice of UK broadband. However, this type of broadband uses an existing telephone line. Therefore, if a home does not have an active telephone line set up, you will need to have this sorted before arranging for broadband installation

Cable broadband

It is important to begin by checking that cable services are available in the local area. This can be done by phoning Virgin Media or checking on their website..

Cable broadband uses a special cable connection which needs to be installed into the customer's home. If the property is not already connected to cable the engineer usually drills a small hole through a window frame so the cables can enter the property. The engineer will then attach a small white box to the wall by the window so that the cables can run from it.

It is important to note that if you are renting property you should get written permission from the landlord before installation takes place. This is because damage to the window frame will be noted when inventory checks are carried out at the end of the contract and this could result in the landlord deducting money from the security deposit.

Household Help

Household help in London is available at a price. The best way to find help is through personal recommendations or via online agencies.

Unwanted Items

If you bought over items that do not fit, or you no longer need, you can sell items online using sites such as www.gumtree.co.uk. Many charity shops will collect unwanted items from you directly. You can also use websites such as <http://uk.fr.org> to help locate someone to collect items from you.

Banking

Opening a bank account will be a priority. Although this is a fairly simple process, foreigners will require proof of income and employment, as well as evidence of a local address.

Unlike in other countries, most banks in the UK do not charge customers to use their services. Instead, some banks even offer incentives to encourage people to choose them over their competitors.

Online banking is a standard feature offered by all banks in the United Kingdom and makes managing everyday finances really simple.

Money in the United Kingdom

The official currency in the United Kingdom is the British Pound (£). One pound (GBP) is divided into 100 pence.

- Notes: £5, £10, £20 and £50
- Coins: £2 and £1, then 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 pence

Most debit and credit cards are accepted in the UK and ATMs can be found nearly everywhere, and generally offer the best exchange rates (transaction charges do exist for international card use, and can quickly add up).

Banks with a more prominent international presence such as HSBC and Santander are an excellent option those who have banked with these institutions in their home country or for those that travel regularly. It may help to open an account in your current location before moving to the UK as opening and changing accounts in the UK may take a while.

Currency can be exchanged at most banks, bureaux de change and even at post offices – which actually offer some of the best rates.

Banks in the United Kingdom at generally open from 9am to 5pm. However, telephone banking services operate over an extended period of time.

ATMs and credit cards

ATMs are readily available in all major towns and cities in the UK and are operation 24/7. Customers can use the ATM of any other UK bank without incurring any additional changes. However, if you are using foreign-issued bank cards they are likely to incur bank charges for each transaction at an ATM in the UK. Most bank and credit cards issued in the UK are based on a Chip and Pin system.

More and more people in the UK avoid carrying large sums of cash and retailers accept major credit cards for even the most minor payment.

Taxes in the United Kingdom

Expats who have lived in the UK for over 183 days across the tax year must pay tax on their UK or overseas-generated income. Tax rates vary from 20 percent for an income of up to GBP 32,000 annual gross income, 40 percent for amounts over GBP 32,000 and 45 percent for amounts over GBP 150,000 (allowances for Tax Year 2016/2017). The main personal allowance is GBP 11,000, under which a person pays no tax. The tax year ends on 5 April. (allowances for the Tax Year 2016/2017)

Expats must complete form A86, downloadable from www.hmrc.gov.uk, and submit it to their local

tax office, for the purposes of determining their correct tax status. Until this is done expats will be assigned a temporary insurance number to establish their tax level. This will mean they will pay a higher rate of tax ("Emergency tax") but this can be refunded once they acquire full tax status.

* Tax regulations change regularly and expats are advised to consult a tax expert to find out the latest information.

Children

Expats moving to London with children in tow can take comfort in the fact that there is plenty to see and do, regardless of the weather.

On summer days, take the kids for a ride on the hop-on hop-off topless sightseeing buses; the ticket also includes a Thames River boat ride that takes tourists past numerous city attractions. Other options for fun in the sun include exploring the wonderful royal parks like St James, Regent's Park and Hyde Park.

In the event of cold or rainy weather check out Madame Tussauds, with its wax sculptures of famous people, and Hamleys Toy Shop for the single best collection of wallet-sapping toys in the world.

Other great activities for expat kids in London are the London Eye, especially at night, and the London Dungeon, with its gory recreations of London's medieval past. Museums for kids are fun-filled: the Natural History Museum, the Science Museum and the charming Victoria and Albert Museum are just some of the museums available to Londoners.

The West End offers a range of theatre experiences aimed at children. Classic shows include The Lion King, Aladdin and Potted Pirates.

Another good option is the well managed and fascinating London Zoo, about the closest kids will get to life-threatening animals in Britain.

A little further afield is the Chessington World of Adventures - a theme park complete with zoo, roller coasters and water slides.

A top winter activity is ice skating which can be done at the Alexandra Palace Ice Rink, Somerset House, Marble Arch, and outside the National History Museum in South Kensington. London's Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park is also a great activity for children, with lots of rides and activities.

You can also find swimming at council run leisure centres as well as privately owned health clubs. Bowling, cinemas and extra curricular activities such as ballet, sports clubs, drama classes, instrument lessons, gymnastics etc are also available. A great resource to find more information on activities available in your area is <http://www.netmums.com>. ref: <http://www.exparrivals.com>

More Resources

There is a lot of information about the United Kingdom and London on the internet: have a look, but please remember that opinions and experiences differ. You may find the following websites useful:

School website: www.dwightlondon.org

Timeout: <http://www.timeout.com/london>

Expat Arrivals: <http://www.exparrivals.com/the-united-kingdom/moving-to-the-united-kingdom>

London Town : <http://www.londontown.com/>

Books such as *The (very) best of British* by Mike Etherington, may be a fun way to learn the difference between some English words.

Focus: <https://www.focus-info.org/>

Part Four: Transitions



This chapter is based on an article entitled “Transition Programming in International Schools:

“An Emergent Mandate” by Barbara F. Schaetti (originally published in 1996, by the Association for the Advancement of International Education), was derived from a model of transition by the late David Pollock². It has been included in this Handbook to help parents gain an understanding of the emotional challenges that may be experienced when moving internationally.

Student mobility is a defining characteristic of most international schools. It’s not uncommon for 30% of any given student population to turn over every year. While faculty and staff mobility may be less extensive, regular turnover is not unusual.

Good international schools like Dwight are accustomed to serving internationally-mobile families. The school provides a flexible admissions programme, and recognises the importance of encouraging students to stay engaged with their mother tongue languages which connect them to their home country and cultural heritage. The International Baccalaureate Programmes were designed with internationally-mobile students in mind, and teachers and students are encouraged to draw on each student’s previous learning, academic and life experiences

Children who move internationally because of a parent’s occupation are now known as Third Culture Kids (TCKs). Over half of Dwight London’s population are TCKs. Cross Culture Kids (CCKs) are children who are living or studying in environment where there is strong cultural diversity and where international mobility is common. All of Dwight’s students are CCKs

Part of the transition process entails understanding about Culture Shock. Culture shock can be defined as the feeling of disorientation as one moves from a familiar cultural environment to a different cultural environment. There are many symptoms and signs of culture shock that can set in after the initial ‘honeymoon’ period when the new setting is interesting, unusual, exciting, and can start two-to-six months after arrival. Suddenly everything familiar seems unfamiliar. (Unfortunately, for many families moving to London in the summertime, this can coincide with Britain’s long, dark, dreary days of winter.)

The Process of Transitions

Phase 1: Involvement

People who are involved in their community have a sense of belonging. They are perceived by others as being part of a group, with a reputation—for good or ill—and a social/professional position. They are known by others and they in turn know the people around them: histories, weaknesses, strengths. They have a similar knowledge about the community itself. They know where to look for the first flowers in spring, where to go to get their shoes fixed, multiple ways to get from point A to point B depending on the weather or traffic conditions. As an adult global nomad put it to me after living in a rural community for thirteen years, being involved means ‘everyone knows you for 50 miles around and 50 years back.’

People in the involved phase typically present themselves to others as committed to their community, responsible and responsive. Their internal experience is one of intimacy. They feel secure, confirmed by the world around them in who they are. While they may also, of course, feel confined and claustrophobic, they nonetheless know what is expected of them without question.

The involvement phase means people’s time orientation is to the present. Those in this phase are not thinking about where they have come from nor are they thinking about where they are going. Although they of course think about the past and the future, their primary orientation is in terms of what is going on now.

The experience of involvement typically requires that a person spend time in a given geographic location. It’s important to remember that multi-mover students and their families may not have a recent experience of this phase of the transition experience. The well-known 3-year expatriate cycle does not really allow for it: the first year you’re in the confusion of arrival, the second year you’re beginning to figure out how things work, the third year—just as you’re becoming involved—you get transferred on.

For some, a transfer can be a big relief. International school students are quick to say that one advantage of moving is that you can re-invent yourself in your new location. Don’t like the reputation you have?—change it at your next school. Want to start fresh?—wait for that next international transfer.

Of course, the flip side of this is also true: do like the reputation you’ve worked hard to build, now begin all over again from the bottom up. A multi-mover non-salaried spouse, having at the time lived in one place for several years, told me how she had finally been able to build a reputation in the community such that she was elected to the board of her children’s school. At last here was a position which she could put directly on her c.v. (resume), a credible position with status (albeit volunteer). Unlike other expatriate spouse volunteer positions, she would not have to search for ways to legitimise its professional relevance to hoped-for future employers. This multi-mover, finally re-involved in her community after their last transfer, came home one day to learn that her husband had been transferred yet again. There she was, facing loss of reputation, loss of position, loss of being known and of knowing others. Time to start over—again.

Phase 2: Leaving

When people learn that they are about to be transferred, their time orientation suddenly shifts from the present to the future—where are we going, what will it be like, will I fit in...?

People in the leaving phase of transition are typically (and hopefully) perceived by others in celebratory fashion. Friends pay them a lot of attention, ask a lot of questions about where they are going and when. It's a time of recognition, of farewell parties and of bringing closure to relationships and activities.

Inevitably, however, one's social posture necessarily becomes distant. In order to leave, one must loosen ties, let go of roles, disengage. In order to transplant a plant, one has to pull up its roots. Just as when transplanting a plant, however, a person's roots must be carefully disengaged; they will otherwise be torn and damaged and not be able to take firm hold again in the new location.

While those in the leaving phase of a transition must disengage from people and activities being left behind, so too must those remaining disengage from people leaving. This can lead, on everyone's part, to feelings of rejection and resentment. A child or adolescent—or indeed an adult—may understand when friends plan future activities and don't include them, but it hurts nonetheless.

International school teachers often report another dimension to disengagement. It's common to see students creating conflict and rousing anger with one another as a way to ease the sense of loss from an impending transfer. For some reason humans seem to think it's easier to leave a friend when we're angry with him or her than otherwise. Unfinished business goes with us, however. Three months later, six months later, the regret over harsh words once spoken can very much impede a person's ability to settle into a new community. Just when it seems least worth our effort—after all, we'll never see this other person again—is when it's most important to reconcile differences.

Leaving, one's own or a friend's, is a time fraught with emotion. One common response is to deny uncomfortable feelings. (There is a bumper sticker in the United States which reads "denial is not a river in Egypt".) I asked a group of secondary school students with whom I worked recently what skills they or those they knew had gained from moving internationally. One young man replied, "how not to feel feelings". The other students laughed with him, but everyone in that room knew the truth of what he said. For multi-movers especially, not feeling feelings can become a survival skill. So can disengaging from all academic and social roles immediately upon learning of a transfer. While people leaving must disengage, they must do so in a timely fashion: neither too late nor too early.



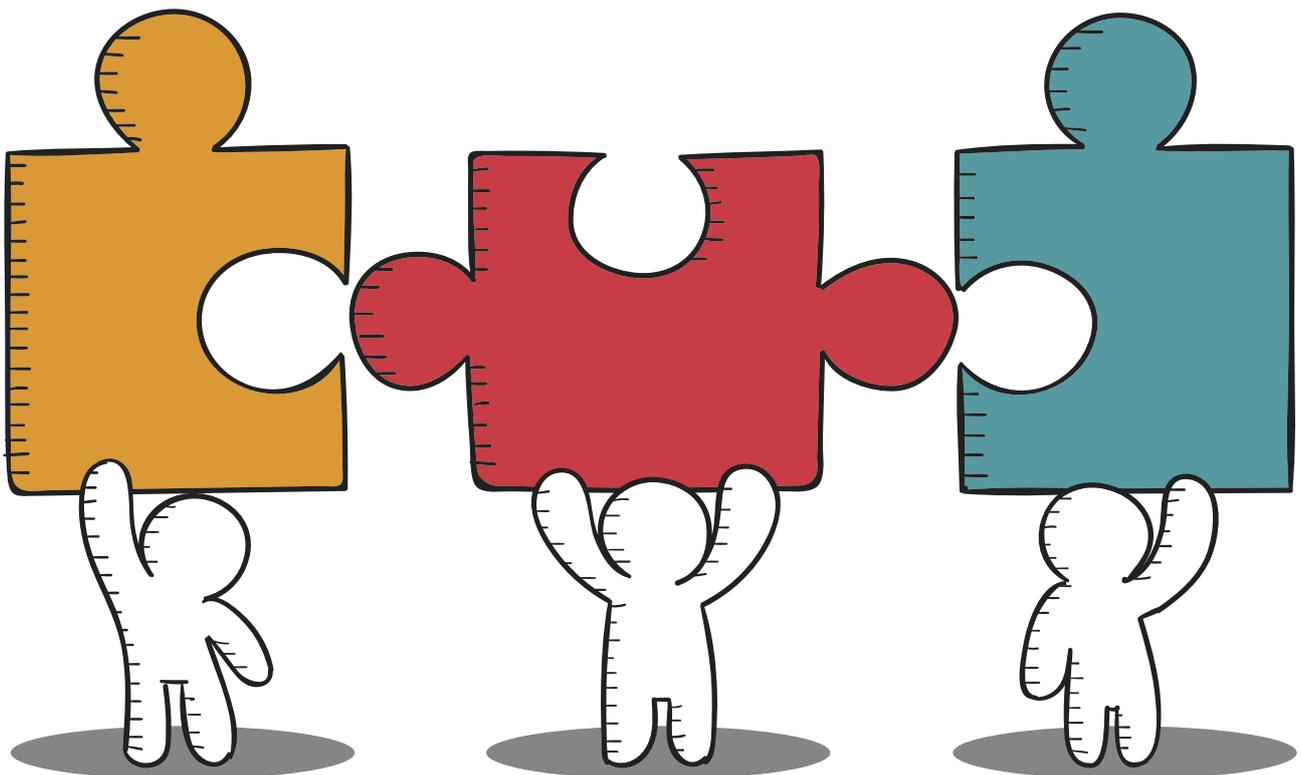
Transition Phase 3: Transition

When people find themselves without status, unknown and unknowing. They have special knowledge—such as where to go to get shoes fixed in Copenhagen—which is totally without use in Tokyo. Their internal experience is typically one of chaos and isolation. The whole world seems turned upside down, often right on top of them. Time orientation for people in this phase is typically to the future: how will this situation resolve itself, will it ever end.

The transition phase is a time of self-centeredness. People in this phase necessarily think first and foremost of themselves. Despite all good intentions, parents may be less emotionally available to their children during this time and certainly the reverse is true. At the same time, just when people may most want to isolate, they must self-initiate: get up, get out, meet others, keep busy. It's typically a time of psychological anxiety. There's often a loss of self-esteem as the reality sinks in that you truly are statusless and unknown by others.

The experience of this phase as chaotic may be exacerbated by being on "home leave," visiting friends and family and favourite places, living in hotels or other people's homes, rather than being in one's own domain. The loss of continuity brought on by a move is extreme during this phase; one is not only without familiar people and places but also without the household goods which may be the only real continuity outside the immediate family. Teachers and staff can educate students and parents about "sacred objects," those few things which remind a person of home and community wherever he or she may be. Sacred objects are best taken on the airplane, in a carry-on bag, rather than packed in a household shipment.

However uncomfortable this phase may be, it can also be a time of great creativity. The creative act is essentially one of stepping outside the tried and true into something new and different. William Bridges, in his book *Transitions*, writes about the chaos of transitions as a necessary phase, a necessary fermentation, out of which comes the creative future¹. The more this experience of chaos is resisted, the less creative are the future possibilities. This is an important perspective and consideration for people in transition, even for the non-salaried spouse and dependent child who may not feel that they have much power over future possibilities.



Transition Phase 4: Entering

People in this phase of transition are constantly having to introduce themselves to others. In uncertain positions within the new community, they may easily misinterpret nonverbal signals and moves taken for granted by others. Entering is often a time when people feel marginalized, on the edges of the society and looking for a way in to the centre.

The entering phase of a transition is usually one of great vulnerability. People in this phase can often be ambivalent, fearful, and easily offended. While their time orientation may again be to the present, it may also be only temporary as they look repeatedly to the past and the (often now idealised) memory of where home once was.

Students at all grade levels repeatedly tell me that their first self-imposed task upon entering a new school is to make friends. Even students in the midst of transition fatigue, more inclined to isolate than to socialize, need to have at least one friend before any measure of security is reached in the new environment.

Transition Phase 5: Re-Involvement

The most fortunate of those in transition stay in their new location long enough to finally complete the cycle. Now one's time orientation is again to the present, this time with a sense of permanence. People who have re-involved themselves again have a sense of belonging, of knowing others and of being known. They again have a reputation and a position in society. They experience themselves as committed and secure, affirmed by the community in which they live, work, study, and play.

A Special Kind of Transition: Re-Entry

Re-entry, moving to one's passport country, is typically found to be the most difficult of all transitions. As such, it requires special attention in any discussion of international school student transitions.

Many factors come into play to make re-entry such a challenging transition, not least of which is the assumption that one is "going home." Even a short one or two year international sojourn is enough to change perspective and outlook. People returning to their passport countries after such a brief time abroad may expect to fit right back into their old friendships and daily patterns. Typically, however, their international experiences have re-shaped them enough that they don't fit in quite the same way. They've become to some extent like a square peg trying to squeeze into a round hole, a hole they think should be familiar but isn't. This is all the more true for the multi-mover or long-term international sojourner whose experience of "home" may be based solely on family stories or periodic vacations. A Canadian who grew up in Papua New Guinea and India spoke of "riding on his parent's mythology" about Canada. The Canada which he eventually re-entered bore little resemblance to the Canada of his family's myth.

Entering one's passport country is also challenging because, once there, students typically attend local rather than international schools. Students and teachers in an international setting tend to be very aware of helping new students make friends—after all, everyone there has at one time or another been new. This is much less the case in a local school context where student mobility is more often the exception than the rule. Ask any international school multi-mover student who has experienced re-entry which is easier, entering another international posting or re-entering one's

Transition activities and education specific to preparing students for a re-entry experience include those described earlier in the discussion of "leaving". The particular characteristics of re-entry should also be addressed however, giving a slightly different twist to the focus of the work. It can be especially effective for students to hear from their peers on this topic.

¹Bridges, William. *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*. Reading MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1980.

²Pollock, David C., *The Transition Model*, Albany NY: Interaction Inc., 1990.

Parents with questions about Transition, TCKs or who want tips on strategies and more information on these areas are invited to contact Mary Langford in the Admissions Office:

mlangford@dwightlondon.org.

Adult Involvement

Once your children are settled, you will need to find things to help you enjoy your new life in London too.

This is possible through school by volunteering to help in the classroom or by getting involved in the school's parent association.

Groups such as Focus: <http://www.focus-info.org/> are a great resource for getting involved in the community, including clubs, culture, events and activities , and finding employment opportunities.

Another great website is: <http://local.mumsnet.com/find-a-local-site>, here you will find a wealth of information on whats on in your local area.

Hampstead Women's Club: <http://www.hwcinlondon.co.uk/>, the Hampstead Women's Club (HWC) is a multinational social organisation for women living in the London area.

St John's Women's Club: <https://www.sjwwc.org/>, the St John's Women's Club (SJWWC) is an activities based organisation aimed to show you the best around London.

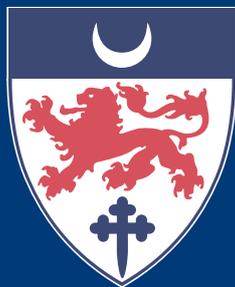


DPA Out and About Club

The Dwight Parent Association Out and About Club is run by Michele O'Neill, a Dwight parent with two children in the Upper School. The DPA Out and About Club organise activities exploring London with friends, whether this be a walking tour, a museum exhibit or a hidden gem that London has to offer. Details can be found in the parent newsletter and on the school calendar.

For more information, please email michele@seanoneill.com.





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