

## Guide to Homesickness

Summer school is an enriching experience which provides our students with an invaluable opportunity to try new things and meet new people. Likewise, students have the chance to improve their confidence and communication skills in an immersive environment. Many of our students adapt to summer school quickly and easily, however, even the most well-travelled among them can experience homesickness, so it's always better to be prepared.

### Recognising Homesickness at Summer School

Homesickness may manifest in various ways, such as:

- Crying and tears, especially around free time and before bed
- Social withdrawal
- Challenging behaviour
- Difficulty sleeping
- Decreased motivation in lessons and activities
- Anxious behaviour

### Supporting Students to Overcome Homesickness

Helping students feel better involves:

- Reassuring them that homesickness is normal
- Allowing time to adjust and settle into the new environment
- Encouraging open discussions about their feelings
- Participation in social activities
- Discovering what helps them to relax
- Writing letters home

### How does SBC support homesick students?

Our dedicated pastoral staff are skilled in handling welfare issues, and proactively supporting students through homesickness. They will help to normalise the feeling of homesickness, providing assurance that it's a temporary feeling. Similarly, they will provide guidance in overcoming this feeling by taking an individualised approach to the students in their care. Daily communication among staff ensures the ongoing welfare of students, with details promptly shared our Student Experience team, who keep parents informed.



## Parental Support Before and During Summer School:

### Before Summer:

- Normalise – talk about homesickness and how to cope: let your child know that feeling homesick is normal and talk about ways to handle it.
- Get your child involved in preparing for the trip: let them help with the preparations to make them feel more in control and confident.
- Reassure them they can call home if needed: let your child know they can phone home whenever they need to.
- Encourage them to talk to staff about their feelings: if your child feels upset, remind them that the staff is there to listen and help.
- Focus on their ability to handle challenges: remind your child of their strengths and that they can manage the challenges ahead.

### During Summer:

- Give your child time to settle in and feel confident: let your child take time to adjust. This will help them feel more comfortable and confident.
- Be proud of what they achieve and experience: celebrate their successes and new experiences. This makes them feel good about themselves.
- Help them ask staff for support if needed: if your child needs help, guide them to talk to the staff. They are there to support your child.
- Contact your child only at set times: only call your child during the agreed times. Too much contact can disturb their routine.
- Avoid calling before bedtime: try not to call your child before bedtime, as this can be a difficult time for them to settle down and rest.
- Share any concerns with the Student Experience Team: if you have any worries, talk to our team. We will help and listen to your concerns.

## Parental Support from Summer Boarding Courses:

We understand that your child attending Summer School can be an anxious time for parents and Summer Boarding Courses provides ongoing support. Your Student Experience team will remain accessible via email or phone, ensuring parents can stay connected. We encourage students to call home regularly, and a daily blog with updates and photos will offer additional insight into the day-to-day life at Summer School. Full details of this support can be found in the 'Keeping in Contact' section of the Parent Welcome Pack.