

BENENDEN

Student Joining Instructions 2025

Benenden School, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 4AA, UK Tel: +44 7500 432 854 (from 9 July)
benenden@discoverysummer.co.uk

1. Getting ready

At least 6 weeks before arrival:

- ☐ Complete the **Medical/Consent Form** www.discoverysummer.co.uk/medicalform (see section 4)
- ☐ Complete the **Travel Form** www.discoverysummer.co.uk/travelform (see section 5)
- ☐ If necessary, **at least 3 days** before travel, apply for an **ETA Visa** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-an-electronic-travel-authorisation-eta>
- ☐ If necessary, **translate any medical letters/instructions into English** (see section 4)
- ☐ Read through this document carefully



2. Packing list



TRAVEL ITEMS

- ☐ Passport + Visa
- ☐ Travel tickets
- ☐ Course confirmation letter
- ☐ Letter of consent to travel
- ☐ EHIC (European Health Insurance Card)
– for EEA/Swiss citizens
- ☐ Money (see section below)

OTHER

- ☐ Refillable water bottle
- ☐ Toiletries including shower gel, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant
- ☐ Bath towel
- ☐ Sun cream
- ☐ Hairbrush
- ☐ Hairdryer
- ☐ UK Adapter for electrical appliances (3 pin, 220 volt, RoHS Compliant)
- ☐ Mobile phone + charger
- ☐ Lockable suitcase
- ☐ Small backpack for excursions
- ☐ Medication – if necessary (see section below)
- ☐ Glasses/contact lenses + cleaning equipment

CLOTHES

(labelled with your name)

- ☐ Summer clothes
- ☐ Warm clothes (e.g. warm jacket, jumper, trousers) temperatures may be as low as 12°C
- ☐ Underwear
- ☐ Pyjamas
- ☐ Waterproof jacket and umbrella
- ☐ Old clothes for arts and 'messy' activities
- ☐ Smarter clothes (for evening parties)
- ☐ Sun hat + sunglasses

SPORTS CLOTHES / EQUIPMENT

(we provide basic sports equipment)

- ☐ Sports clothes
- ☐ 2 pairs of trainers
- ☐ Swimsuit
- ☐ Swimming towel

What NOT to bring

- Unnecessary valuables (expensive watches/jewellery, iPads/laptops etc). Any valuables must be handed in to the Course Office. They are not covered by the Medical and Travel Insurance policy
- Any clothes that are delicate and unsuitable for a school laundry
- Bedlinen
- School books, stationery, pens, pencils etc. All materials are provided by us
- **Nuts or any food containing nuts (e.g. peanut butter, Nutella, chocolates containing nuts)**



Special Sports Options

(At extra cost. As spaces are limited, please book in advance)

HORSERIDING

Jodhpurs or **leggings (not jeans)**
Long-sleeved top

Riding gloves

A hard hat and boots will be provided by the stables.

TENNIS

Shorts and top, tennis shoes/trainers, cap

Good players should bring their own tennis racket (basic rackets are provided).

TRAMPOLINE

Comfortable clothes (leggings, shorts, t-shirts)

Grip socks



3. Pocket money

- Please bring a **pre-paid card or debit/credit card** as many shops, cafes and tourist destinations (including Thorpe Park and Chessington World of Adventures) do **not** take cash
- We recommend **£60 cash per week** (£5, £10, £20 notes) for gifts, snacks etc
- Bring current bank notes** <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/banknotes/current-banknotes>



- There are **NO CASH POINTS (ATMs) at Benenden**
- The administrator will give you some pocket-money before excursions
- If your parents want to transfer pocket money during the course, we charge a **fee of £25**.



4. Health/Medication

- Your parents must complete our **Medical + Consent Form** www.discoverysummer.co.uk/medicalform **at least 6 weeks** before arrival
- To discuss a medical, welfare or behavioural issue, contact **Mary Shipley** at Head Office **+44 20 7937 1199** mary@discoverysummer.com

- On arrival, please hand in all medication (except for auto injectors/Epipens or inhalers which you need to keep with you) to the course office
- Medicine must be in the original box or bottle clearly labelled with (pharmacy or doctor's) instructions translated into English, in date.** If you need to take the medicine, our staff will administer it

If you're feeling ill:

- The House Parent will look after you
- Our appointed First Aiders will administer common, non-prescribed medication such as paracetamol and throat lozenges as necessary unless your parents advise us not to do so
- We cannot give or allow you to take any other medication unless it has been prescribed by a doctor

- If necessary, we'll take you to the **local medical practice or Accident and Emergency department**. In the UK NHS emergency treatment is free but the medical practice/hospital may charge you for a consultation with a doctor or nurse
- In case of illness or injury we will follow the advice of the attending medical consultant/surgeon unless your parents ask us not to
- If you need to see a dentist, we will take you. You may need to pay for this
- Medical expenses may be claimed under our **Medical and Travel Insurance Policy** (see separate document), provided they are not for a pre-existing condition.



5. Airport transfer services

- We offer free transfers **for flights scheduled to arrive at/depart from London Heathrow, and London Gatwick between 09:00h and 16:00h on the published arrival/departure days**
- **Eurostar St Pancras** – free transfers at specific times, please contact us for details
- If you're arriving at another airport, outside published times or on a different day we'll arrange a private transfer at extra cost
- Please complete the **Travel Form** – **at least 6 weeks** before the start of the course - even if you are coming direct to the school www.discoverysummer.co.uk/travelform

ON ARRIVAL IN THE UK

- When you arrive at the airport you'll go through passport control, collect your luggage and walk through customs. Our airport representatives/drivers will be in the arrivals hall holding a Discovery Summer sign with your name on it
- We are responsible for you from the time you come through customs on arrival to the time you go through to security on departure
- We'll take you to the course centre by coach or taxi. You normally leave the airport within 2 hours but there may be a delay if other students' flights are delayed

If you have any questions or have a problem at the airport, please contact our Travel Coordinator immediately on +44 20 7937 1199



6. Travelling directly to Benenden

Full details at www.discoverysummer.co.uk/mapsdirections

Benenden School, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 4AA (from 9 July) +44 7500 432 854

If your family is bringing you directly to the school, please let us know in advance. Ideally you should arrive between **10:00h-12:00h or 14:00h-16:00h**.

By rail:

The nearest train station is **Staplehurst Railway Station**. You can get a train to Staplehurst that leaves from London Charing Cross/Waterloo East/London Bridge. These depart every 30 minutes. From Staplehurst, you will need to get a taxi to Benenden School. **You must reserve this taxi in advance.**

MTC Cars – by phone: **+44 1580 890 003** (approx. £30 for a single journey, or £60 for a return journey)

United Cars – online: <https://united-cars.co.uk/book-online/>

(approx. £45 for a single journey – we recommend booking your return journey for 1.5 hours later)
what3words for Staplehurst Railway Station: **steadily.witless.visions**
what3words for Benenden School: **hook.piglets.baking**

By road:

Benenden is approximately 2-2.5 hours' drive away from central London. **Sat Nav postcode: TN17 4AA**



7. What happens on arrival



- Our staff and [English Student Hosts](#) will welcome you
- You'll be registered in the course office and hand in your money, credit/debit card, passport, airline forms and medication for safekeeping
- We'll give you a lanyard and ID card to wear at all times
- You'll then join in activities and meet new friends
- You'll have a written and oral English placement test and be placed into the correct English class (this may happen the following day).



8. Keeping you safe and happy

The following staff will look after you:

- The **Course Director** is in charge of the course
- The **Administrator** helps the Course Director and is in the course office to answer questions
- The **House Parent** is like the 'mum' or 'dad' who makes sure you are happy and settled in, and looks after you if you're ill.

We have responsibility to **safeguard** you which means:

- Making sure you have the basic things you need (food, accommodation etc)
- Looking after you if you're ill
- Making sure all the activities you do are safe and appropriate
- Making sure all the adults working on the course are safe and know how to look after you
- Educating you about safety in real life and online
- Making sure other children don't bully or abuse you
- Helping you if you have any problems.

If you or your parents have any questions or concerns about safeguarding, please speak to the Course Director. If you don't wish to speak to the Course Director or you aren't happy with his/her response you can contact:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mary Shipley) on +44 20 7937 1199 mary@discoverysummer.com

or the **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Leo Child)** on +44 20 7937 1199
leo@discoverysummer.com

Our safeguarding policy is available at: www.discoverysummer.co.uk/safeguarding-policy



9. Laundry

- Personal laundry and bed linen is washed once a week
- All clothes must be **machine-washable**
- Please clearly name all your clothes (name tags or written on in permanent pen)



10. Meals

- We provide 3 meals a day and evening snack
- Meals are taken in the school dining hall and on excursions we'll give you a packed lunch
- We provide a healthy range of food to suit international students
- Please tell us **at least 6 weeks** before the start of the course if you have any allergies or other dietary requirements (e.g. vegetarian, halal)
- If you can't find any food you like, the House Parent will help you. If you have a problem with the food, please speak to the Course Director



11. Religious/ cultural observance

- We have a quiet room where you can go to pray
- If you'd like to visit a place of worship e.g. a church, please speak to the course office
- If you would like to discuss any religious/cultural needs before you arrive, please contact **Mary Shipley** at our Head Office +44 20 7937 1199 mary@discoverysummer.com



12. Accommodation

- 3-4 houses, average 40 students per house
- Bedrooms range between 2-6 beds
- Showers: ratio approximately 1:6
- Boys and girls sleep in separate houses/areas and are not allowed to visit each other's rooms
- Students from other countries will be sharing your room/on your corridor so you can make friends and speak in English.

13. Activities and Excursions

Have a look at the sample programmes:

Young Learners (8-12 years):

https://www.discoverysummer.co.uk/downloads/programmes/2025_Benenden_YLs_English_Plus.pdf

Teens (13-15 years):

https://www.discoverysummer.co.uk/downloads/programmes/2025_Benenden_Teens_English_Plus.pdf

Facilities include: indoor 25m 6-lane swimming pool, sports hall, dance studio, modern gym, 400-metre athletics track, football pitches, 11 all-weather tennis courts, 500-seat theatre, music hall, drama studio.



14. Rules and Behaviour Policy

DO

- Speak English
- Listen to staff and follow their instructions
- Be on time (always)
- Be kind, friendly to others
- Attend and join in all lessons and activities
- Look after your belongings and the school
- Keep your room tidy and make your bed
- Follow the school guidelines relating to the use of phones, cameras and games consoles. These must not be used during classes, meals or activities
- Stay in your bedroom after bedtime and remain quiet
- Give all your money, medication and valuables to the course office to look after
- Have your *Discovery ID* card with you at all times

DON'T

- Leave the school unless with staff/parent/guardian
- Buy or consume alcohol, take drugs or smoke (cigarettes or e-cigarettes)
- Bring unnecessary valuables
- Bring or buy knives, weapons or toy guns
- Swear, fight, bully or use inappropriate language or gestures
- Drop litter, or chew gum
- Access or share illegal/inappropriate online material
- Cause damage (e.g. to school property, equipment or other student's property). Any damage must be paid for
- Steal or shoplift
- Swim without a lifeguard being present
- Use fire escapes unless for emergency exit
- Go into boy's accommodation if you are a girl or go into girl's accommodation if you are a boy without agreement of the Course Director.

Good behaviour is encouraged and rewarded. If rules are broken, you will be given a warning and we will discuss how you should improve your behaviour. We may contact your parents and you may miss an activity or excursion.

VERY IMPORTANT

The safety and well-being of our students is our primary concern. Students who break British law, do not obey the course rules, who repeatedly misbehave, do not follow the instructions of the course staff or otherwise disrupt or adversely affect the smooth running of the course will be asked to leave the course **immediately** at their own expense and without refund of fees.



15. Mobile phone policy

The Discovery Summer experience is about making new friends and communicating in English. This is why we limit the amount of time you can spend on your mobile phone/devices.

- You **can** use your phone to contact your parents **after lunch (13:30-14:00) or after evening activities (8-12-year-olds 21:00 – 21:30, 13-15-year-olds 21:00-22:00)**
- You **can't** use your phone in **lessons, activities, meetings or mealtimes**
- If you don't follow this rule, we'll store your phone in the course office
- Students will **not** have their phones at night
- We arrange **No Phone Days** when you can win points by not using your phone all day
- **Free Wifi** and all UK mobile networks available on campus
- You can buy a UK SIM cards (£5) and top-up credit from the course office.

16. Benenden Blog



The **Discovery Summer Benenden Blog** is updated every 1-2 days during the course with photos, videos etc of all the fun. <https://blogs.discoverysummer.co.uk/benenden>

Password: sheep

Discovery Summer updates are also posted on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#)



17. Queries, Problems or Complaints

If you have any questions, problems or complaints contact:

- **Head Office: +44 20 7937 1199 (24 hours)** info@discoverysummer.com
- **During the summer** (from 9 July) contact the Benenden Course Director **+44 7500 432 854** benenden@discoverysummer.co.uk

If your complaint is not resolved promptly, please contact the Managing Director, Jane Merrick so that we can solve the problem as soon as possible. We aim to resolve any complaints quickly. If you're not happy with the response, contact EnglishUK (in English) complaints@englishuk.com



17. Departures

The day before you leave:

- Your teacher will give you your certificate, academic report and folder
- You'll have time to pack and your House Parent will help you check your room
- The Course Director will explain what time you'll be taken to the airport.

On departure we'll give you your:

- Passport
- Travel Documents
- Remaining pocket money
- Bank/Credit card
- Any valuables you handed in
- Your medication

We'll arrange your departure coach/taxi. At the airport we'll help you with check-in/baggage drop and take you to security. If your parents have booked the 'Unaccompanied Minor' service with the airline, we'll hand you over to the airline after check-in.

Leaving direct from Benenden

If your parents are collecting you, come to the course office before **12 noon**. If they need to come at another time, please contact the course office to arrange it.

If you're going to leave the course centre with another adult for a short visit or on departure, your parents **must** give permission by completing the [Exeat Form](#) in advance.

Discovery Summer Head Office, 33 Kensington High Street, London, W8 5EA

+ 44 (0)20 7937 1199 info@discoverysummer.co.uk