

Support for international student families at the University of Leeds

Contacts at Leeds

Claire Freeston (International Officer for South Korea): c.e.freeston@leeds.ac.uk

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Generic email for International Student Office, including pre-arrival enquiries:
internationalwelcome@leeds.ac.uk

We welcome many students and their families each year to Leeds. Your students are welcome to contact Claire or Dulcie directly to enquire about their individual circumstances if they wish to.

Support from the International Student Office

When students arrive in Leeds, we would be more than happy to meet them for a welcome talk (if they are postgraduate researchers they will be automatically invite to one) and we can talk through any questions that they may have, and introduce them to the range of services and support for them here at Leeds. Before they arrive our International Student Office website has a lot more information at the following

links: http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/21504/living_in_the_uk
and http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/21520/international_families/685/schools

Our Global Community and Coffee Connections

Global Community is our community of international student activities and support at Leeds: http://students.leeds.ac.uk/homepage/172/global_community and for events: http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/1000020/intercultural_experiences and on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/globalcommunityleeds/>



Coffee Connections
A community for partners and families



Come and build your community of friends in Leeds

Coffee Connections is a network for the partners and families of students and staff to meet regularly.

Make new friends and share ideas about how to make the most of living in Leeds at our monthly events.

Enjoy free tea, coffee and cake. Children are welcome too.

Thursday 30 March, 27 April 2017 and 29 June 2017
12.00 - 14.00
Student Common Room, Level 12, Marjorie and Arnold Ziff Building

Join the Coffee Connections community
Sign up to the mailing list: <http://leeds.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/familyevents>
f www.facebook.com/groups/LeedsCoffeeConnections

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Our monthly Coffee Connections provides a relaxed environment for students, their partners, and/or families to come and take a break from studies, and meet with other people, and where they can also share ideas of living and studying in Leeds. Here is a recent flyer for our events to give you an example of what we provide. Incoming students can sign up to a mailing list (link available on the flyer) which will send them monthly information about events going on that might be of interest to the students and their families.

Upon arrival to Leeds we also provide a programme of welcome talks and family welcome talks throughout the year where students would find more detailed information about schooling and family friendly events and services.

Schools

Students will **need a Leeds address** before they can start the application to schools process. Therefore applicants can look at the information beforehand to be familiar with the process before they arrive, and once they have accommodation in Leeds they will be able to apply to schools directly. The Leeds City Council websites won't work outside of the UK. However, the [Unipol website](#) has a great tool that students can use to find out about different areas to live in Leeds, with information on how expensive it is to live there, information about the area itself and distance to the city centre and Universities.

The normal school year begins in September in the UK. However, we have postgraduate researchers arriving all throughout the year with children, and the process is the same, they have to apply for a 'transfer' instead of just applying to schools in the normal cycle. There is now some improved advice on 'transferring schools' on the [Leeds City Council website](#).

Students will need to firstly [choose a few schools](#) that they would like to apply to (usually close to their accommodation), and fill in an 'In Year Common Preference Form' with their choices. They can either email the completed form or post it to Leeds City Council at the address on the website, or hand it into each school individually. Handing it into the school individually also gives the family a chance to get to know the school and ask about the likelihood of places available in the school. Quite often, students that arrive with families choose a few schools they want to visit, and contact them via phone to check any availability, or travel to them directly to ask about any available spaces.

The website above also explains how to fill in the transfer form, with information on when the family should expect to hear back from the Education Department of Leeds City Council about their child's school place. Students should expect it to take around two/three weeks to place a child into school, depending on places available. Leeds City Council aim to reply to all applicants within 20 days. It is in Leeds City Council's best interests to find a place for their child, and they will do their very best to place the child in an available school that suits the family's needs.

If students are looking for childcare in their first few weeks, [Family Information Leeds](#) is a great website to use to find local childminders or childcare agencies.

Depending on the ages of the children, they can also enquire with our nursery on campus - [Bright Beginnings](#) which cares for children aged 3 months to 4/5 years.

It is important to note that the information above is applicable to free, state schools. If a student wants to pay for private education for their child, then they will have to apply to schools directly. Information on private education in England can be found on the [Independent Schools Council website](#).

Under the following headings, we have included information on certain age-groups.

Childcare for children under the age of 3 years

If you have children under the age of 3 years, (the age at which a child starts Nursery - also known as Kindergarten), then they must attend a Childcare Centre. You can find out more information about this on the information for international students with families on our website http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/21520/international_families/600/childcare

As it states on this website, a great website to use when looking for childcare is www.familyinformation.leeds.gov.uk On this website, there is also very useful information on support with childcare costs for children under 3 years of age, and whether you are eligible for these.

Children above 5 years applying to School in the UK

All children in the UK from 5 years old are required to attend school. Under current law, children in England must be in education from the term (semester) after their fifth birthday.

If your child is *older* than this age, they would already have started school in the UK. So instead of applying for your child's first school place, you will instead have to apply for a transfer. Even though your child will be transferring from a School *outside* the UK, the same procedure applies – so please see the information on school transfer above.

Older children of secondary school age

For older children the council advise that the process is as outlined above. Students with children arrive in Leeds all the time with no level of English, and schools are required to adjust to this and meet the needs of the child. The individual School will advise on what year the child may be placed, and what extra support they may need as this may vary school to school.