

COUNTRY HOUSE CAMP

A unique British summer camp for girls



PARENT'S HANDBOOK

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WELCOME TO CHC

Thank you for choosing Country House Camp! Our 40 acres of nature provide the perfect setting for our educational, fun summer programme!

Campers will make friends, try out new activities & learn about English culture from exceptional staff. They'll strengthen their language skills as well as value based social skills. Most of all, they will have FUN! This handbook will help you prepare your child for camp. It will also provide more information about what we do and details of our programme.

Any more questions? Get in touch!



A British summer camp for girls like no other

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Country House Camp we create an environment that is safe and fun for children to make friends from all over the world, challenge themselves, learn new skills, and become more independent, accepting and responsible.

Summers at Country House Camp help children become stronger people who learn to get along and care for each other and the environment around them. Our campers live in a welcoming close-knit community with children from all over the world.

Our philosophy and programming are rooted in the core values of Acceptance, Independence, Responsibility and Teamwork. We put these values into action through a healthy and fun outdoor experience. In an increasingly fast-paced world, camp provides a nurturing, supportive environment in which children can 'go back to the basics' and focus on what is important.

ACCEPTANCE

Our campers come from all over the world. While numerous cultures are represented, the spoken language is English and the common thread among Country House campers is acceptance, tolerance and caring for people of all backgrounds.

INDEPENDENCE

For most children, camp is the first time they become independent from their families. They learn to take healthy risks, make decisions, and live on their own. The independence they learn at camp will help them succeed throughout their lives.

RESPONSIBILITY

Our campers learn the value of their contributions. Whether it's room cleanup or a football match, campers learn they have a role and that others depend on them to perform that role to the best of their abilities.

TEAMWORK

Campers learn the importance of working as a team not only on the fields but in the bedrooms as well. Teamwork involves learning how to share and be respectful. Once learned, it is a lesson children will retain the rest of their lives.





OUR APPROACH

We run small sessions to ensure that our campers get attention and a truly unique experience of English life, language & culture.

Managing small groups allows us to really get to know each child individually and maintain the necessary flexibility to adjust the programme to the certain group of campers that we have each session.

Our staff to camper ratio is a minimum of 1-6, normally 1-5 and our directors work directly with children and staff alike. We are a home away from home.

We offer a combination of scheduled activities and chosen electives to encourage our campers to learn new skills as well as to improve old ones. We help our campers bond over common interests and share their skills as much as we encourage them to step out of their comfort zone and try new things.

On a similar note, at meal times we make a point of helping the children try new foods as we think it is an essential part of living a new culture and growing up. However, we also know exactly what children love to eat and give them the comfort of familiar tastes.

Our English sessions are practical, fun and engaging - for native speakers and learners alike! We believe that being eager to take part in activities led in English combined with the desire to form friendships in English with children who speak a different language, are the two main drives for children to learn to develop their English!

In our English sessions we give them the tools to do just that, by solidifying the English knowledge gained at school throughout the year using a hands-on approach that they can put into practice immediately whilst at camp.

Small groups, family feel: a home away from home



OUR APPROACH

We ask our campers to make their own beds, tidy all their things, & help to clear their own plates, as well as tidy up communal areas at the end of the day.

We also have a rota system where children take turns to really their bedrooms & bathrooms - for prizes and house points!

These are a few of the ways we encourage them to become more independent, responsible, and better team players, and we do it without ever losing fun out of sight. At camp there are a lot of games and prizes; contributing to our camp community is a fun rewarding experience!

Throughout the summer there will be several moments of reflection, either to debrief activities or to give campers and staff the chance to share experiences that everyone may benefit from.

These are not just opportunities for children to work on their English but also to work on themselves and grow as people. There will also be lots of opportunities to be silly and goofy and simply have a great time in a carefree environment!

Country House Camp is TECH FREE. Mobile phones, tablets, laptops, ipods, etc are not allowed. We want children to be able to disconnect from the 'electronic world' so they can have the fun opportunity to discover a world of nature, sports, arts, and adventure





OUR STAFF

We take pride in the the quality of our staff. All staff are personally interviewed, have their references checked and undergo background checks. We understand what it takes to be a Camp Leader.

We know how to create a rich, rewarding summer experience. When hiring staff we look for great role models that show an enthusiasm for working with girls in a warm, caring environment.

We look for individuals with that special 'camp personality'. Though we have high expectations for our staff we also understand how demanding their job is for what we make sure our staff have well deserved breaks to recharge batteries!

We value the work that our staff do every summer we want to make sure that we give our staff the tools and strategies to be successful at their job. We run an intensive training programme before campers arrive which includes workshops that address your child's wellbeing: something of the utmost importance to us.

Staff: camper ratio of at least 1:5





WHAT TO PACK

One of the greatest things children can learn from their summer away with us is how to take care of themselves.

Allow your child to help you pack when planning for camp! This will make her feel much more invested in the idea of going away.

At the end of this handbook you will find a packing list that we've put together for you and your child. This can be used as a checklist. We encourage you to ask your child to tick the items off the list!

We kindly ask you to pack for the whole duration of the programme; our packing list is for a 2 week stay.

IMPORTANT: Children will most likely be taking a few additional things back home with them, such as their camp diary, certificates, souvenirs, any items they have made at camp or anything they may have purchased during the excursions!

For this reason we ask you to please make sure that your child's suitcase has at least 3- 4 kg allowance for any new goods.

Excess baggage can be expensive!

Don't over pack! Use our our packing checklist!



MEDICATION

Children will be asked to give in any medication upon arrival. This will be kept safe and administered by staff according to your instructions. Remember to fill out the Camper Health History Form and let us know the dosage and posology of every medication. These instructions must be in English

PASSPORTS & VALUABLES

Children will be asked to hand out their passport, valuables & pocket money upon arrival. We will keep in safe, along with their medicine. We will give them their money when on excursion days - please note that the children will be responsible for their money when on excursions.

LAUNDRY

We do not normally do any laundry, and ask you to kindly pack for the full duration of the programme. Your child should bring enough socks and underwear for 2 weeks, as well as the recommended number of t-shirts, shorts etc that will ensure they have enough clothes for the duration of their stay.

However, we offer a limited laundry service that we restrict to situations such as your child's clothes getting wet during an activity, too dirty to be used again (for items such as fleeces and cardigans that are meant to be used more than once), or should there be a little pee accident, injury, etc.

Your child will never have to face a situation where she will have no clothes to wear / not be warm.





POCKET MONEY

If your child is flying without you, you may want to give her some money to buy something on the plane. Once at camp, children will have the opportunity to buy ice cream and sweets a few times a week. They will also be able to purchase our camp hoodie (£45) for themselves as well as for friends and siblings, a pencil case, toiletries etc, and want to have money for souvenirs on the London trip.

We therefore recommend that children bring approx £110 with them. Senior Girls will be taken to a few clothing shops on the trip to London, so we would advise they bring an additional £50. Please bring pounds.

Children's wallets will be kept in the safe and given out to children by us when necessary. Pocket money is entirely optional and to the discretion of each parent.

ILLNESS & EMERGENCY

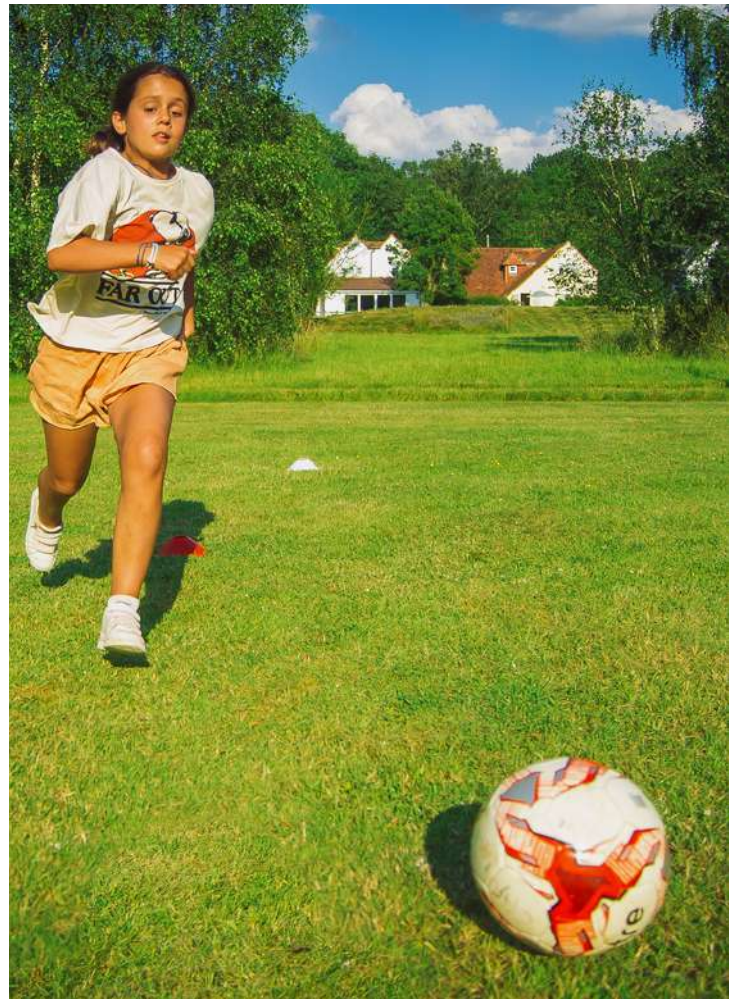
We will be available 24/7 but we ask you to please can you take into consideration any time difference before you make a phone call that is not urgent. Should there be any medical issue, we will of course contact you immediately.

If your child has a cold /cough / headache, the Camp Directors may give her some basic non-prescription medicines such as paracetamol, throat lozenges or cough syrup (NB any other medication must have clear instructions in English).

If it persists we will notify you & arrange a doctor's appointment. For emergencies, an ambulance will be called. There is a very good health centre 5 minutes away, and excellent hospitals within 15 mins drive.

DOCUMENTS & FORMS TO COMPLETE BEFORE TRAVEL

- **CAMPER HEALTH HISTORY FORM** Filled out **ONLINE**. <https://countryhousecamp.co.uk/parents-forms-handbook/>. To be submitted online before start of camp.
- **PERMISSION TO TRAVEL** This is a vital document, needed for all children, regardless.
- **PASSPORT / VISA (WHEN NECESSARY)** To be brought by the child. We will store safely upon arrival. We do not take responsibility for children who are denied entry in the UK due to lack of documentation. ID cards are no longer valid.
- **AIRPORT TRANSPORT FORM** and/ or **PARENT VISITING CAMP FORM**. Filled out **ONLINE**. <https://countryhousecamp.co.uk/parents-forms-handbook/>
- **RIDING WAIVER**. If you signed up your daughter for riding lessons



At the end of this guide you will find a Parent Checklist where amongst other very important things, you will find once again the list of required forms and documents. Please ensure that you have taken care of every single thing on the Parents Checklist. Failing to do so could result in us not being able to welcome your child!





ENGLISH SESSIONS

Children are put into small groups according to ability for their English sessions. Our sessions focus on reading and speaking, and project led; designed to be fun ways in which to improve the girls' overall language abilities - even for those already fluent in English, and extend their vocabulary and pronunciation.

We do not have them running through grammar and verbs: the idea is that sessions are very rewarding as much as other activities, and totally apt for native speakers too. A few areas children might cover during their English sessions: Writing/ Project Time: every day, children will write up the events of the day before, using an Instagram or Facebook post, or similar, as a template, to make it more fun - but practice their written English. Another session might be news reporting/ film makers:

with the Camp Leaders, we discuss a current theme or idea, with a view to learning how to form opinions in English. We then help the children put together an artificial script for a news report and act it out in front of the video camera.

Poetry & music: children read, recite and learn different pieces, from simple Shakespeare to rock and roll! British culture: we will teach children about different - and sometimes, rather funny - elements of British culture, and challenge them to take a few of them home.

For example: how to lay a table for the King, and how to speak at a dinner with Prince William. Or, what is 'Black Tie' and why do British people wear hats when going racing? Team games & energisers: in between all the activities, we break up sessions with team games and energisers - a fantastic way to refresh concentration, learn, and make friends.



GETTING TO & FROM CAMP

FOR CHILDREN ARRIVING ALONE

We offer a complimentary pickup / drop-off service from London Heathrow and London Gatwick airports.

All campers flying to London Heathrow and Gatwick airports that plan to use pickup and drop off service to camp, should arrive/ depart between 10:30AM and 5:00PM on the first and last day of each session. Flights landing outside of this time period may incur a £150 surplus charge per camper.

We recommend a flight arrival time of around midday if possible. Upon arrival, there will be a member of staff waiting for your child as soon as she lands.

Our staff will carry a sign with 'Country House Camp' and will be in Arrivals wearing our camp t-shirts or hoodie.

For your peace of mind, if your child is carrying a mobile phone, feel free to tell her to text you / call you as soon as we have them.

We will nevertheless send a group message to all parents to confirm your child's safe arrival once all children are accounted for.

Please remember to give your child a snack pack for the journey, plus pocket money/ a card to buy something on the plane.

We will be picking up a lot of children that same day so your child may have to wait for other children to arrive before getting on the transport to camp.

It is also a good idea to give your child our phone number and have them keep it close to her passport.

On the day of departure, no child will be left waiting unaccompanied. Our staff members will wait with the children until the parents or flight attendant arrives.



GETTING TO & FROM CAMP

If you are accompanying your child to camp...

Parents are welcome to drop off and / or collect their children from camp, but are asked not to come outside of the stipulated dates and times. Parents are also welcome to use our airport service.

We will be happy to collect you with your daughter and this will not have an additional cost, unless we have to specifically book a taxi to this effect. All parents dropping off children at camp on the first day, must do so between 12pm-3pm.

All parents collecting children from camp on the last day, must do so between 10am - 2pm. If you wish to make your own arrangements to arrive at camp, you may either take a local taxi from the airport, or a train from London Waterloo to our local station, WINCHFIELD which is a 5 min taxi to camp (at extra cost).

If you fly to London Gatwick, you also have the option of taking a train to BLACKWATER, which is a 20min ride from camp.

TRAVEL CONTACTS

Local taxi numbers:

VGT taxis: +44 1252 613 613

Atlas Cars: +44 1252 61 21 61

Our contact numbers:

Sacha: +44 (0) 7837 747 515

sacha@countryhousecamp.com

info@countryhousecamp.com

COUNTRY HOUSE CAMP

Poland Court Poland Lane RG29 1JL
Hook Hampshire





LIVING AT CHC

ACCOMODATION

Children will be housed in rooms with 2 - 8 beds. Shared bathrooms are on each floor. If your child has someone she would like to share the room with, please let us know in advance by filling the appropriate section of the Online Booking Form out.

We will do our best to honour your child's request but please let her know that this can't always be guaranteed and that room changes will not be made upon arrival.

Our staff sleep in each house, so are available 24 hours a day to deal with any problems during the night. Register is taken regularly to make sure all children are present.





HOMESICKNESS GUIDANCE

Each year, over 10 million children around the world pack their bags to go to summer camp!

It is normally easy to find 'things to do' to fill our children's time during the summer. However, a residential summer camp is a very different experience: it's a time for personal growth and development.

Although most parents and children are excited about this opportunity, we understand that sending your child on a plane across the world for 2 weeks can also be a bit scary!

However, a cheerful, confident attitude on your part will get your child off to a great start!

97% of children experience at least some occasional homesickness at camp.

If a child loves her parents and has a good home, why wouldn't she feel some longing for mum, dad, the dog and friends back home? It is completely normal for a child to miss home and nothing to worry about.

Homesickness is often triggered by fear. Fear of not fitting in, fear of change, fear of failure.

In fact, most cases of homesickness seem to be associated with a child's fear that she does not "have what it takes" to survive without family: "I know I am ok at home, but I am not sure about camp."

As a result of these self-doubts, the child starts feeling some insecurity - "I wish I were home..."

Homesickness is often triggered by fear: us parents need to understand & explain the growth opportunity in feeling homesickness!



HOMESICKNESS GUIDANCE

For children who doubted whether they could survive away from home, when they see they not only survive, but THRIVE in the camp environment, what do they now believe about themselves?

They now think “Wow, I am more capable & confident than I ever imagined! I still love home, but my fear that I could not survive outside of my mum’s shadow is wrong. I’m stronger than I thought!”

As you can imagine, this does a lot for self-confidence. In this way, homesickness is an opportunity to help a child grow into a resilient and capable adult.

Our staff are fully prepared to deal with homesickness and we can assure you that your child will be supported every step of the way!

Speak openly of possible homesickness. Feeling homesick and missing family, friends and pets is normal. Knowing this, your child may accept homesickness with less anxiety.

Empathise with your child’s fears, but do not get infected by them.



Express confidence in your child’s resilience and admiration for her courage in going to camp and tell your child that you want them to have fun! Children need to go off to camp with your blessing, not your anxiety.

Give your child the confidence to overcome fears!



HOMESICKNESS GUIDANCE

Each year, over 10 million children around the world pack their bags to go to summer camp!

Work with your child to learn about the camp ahead of time so they know what to anticipate. Heighten their interest by pointing out some of the exciting activities at camp, perhaps by viewing photographs and reading descriptions on our camp website.

Use a calendar to show exactly the amount of time they will be away. Predictability/perspective on the length of separation is important whenever possible.

Pack a personal item from home, such as a stuffed animal or favourite blanket, if you wish.

Reassure your child that he or she will get help from leaders as well as friends when needed. We have over 10 years of combined experience in the camping industry and our staff is fully prepared to deal with any homesickness in a supportive, compassionate, effective way.

Don't make a "pick up plan" or a deal with your child to bring them home if they don't actually like the experience of being away. This may undermine the child's sense that you have confidence in their ability to be on their own, and will set an expectation that they won't like the new experience.





HOMESICKNESS GUIDANCE

Before saying goodbye, avoid making comments that would express anxiety about your child going away.

Even “I hope you’ll be okay” or “what will I do without you” can make a child worried that bad things might happen to them or their parents, and preoccupy them with thoughts of home. Rather, acknowledge in a more positive way that you will miss your child.

For example, say “I’m going to miss you, but I know that you will have a great time at camp.”

If for some reason you do wind-up with a crying, homesick child, be supportive and positive about her ability to adjust and be absolutely firm about sticking it out.

“Just try it one more day” likely translates to “I’m going home in a day.” Again, such statements invite the child to fail. Alternatively, “I really want you to stay” is more likely to translate to, “I don’t have a choice so I might as well make the best of it.”

And finally, don’t feel guilty about encouraging your child to stay at camp. For many children, camp is the first step toward independence and plays an important role in their growth and development.

The paradoxical thing about camp is that even though children sometimes report levels of homesickness, they often rate themselves as very happy in the activities of the day.

Your child will be in great hands! We run a small camp which allow us to get to know every child personally. We've got this! And so do you!

DAILY TIMETABLE



08:00 Rise and Shine!

08:15 Breakfast & Clean Up

09:00 Morning ZOOM,
Morning Gathering & Sign Ups

09:30 English Session

11:00 Snack & break

11:20 Activity Period (3 day cycle)

12:45 Lunch

13:15 Lunch break &
optional games in tent

14:00 Projects

14:30 Activity session 2

15:15 Short break

15:20 Activity session 3

16:45 Break

17:15 All Camp Sport

18:00 Relax & Shower

18:30 Rose Thorn Bud

18:45 Supper

19:30 Evening programme

20:30 Evening gathering & to
bed

21:30 Reading & lights out by
22:00



ACTIVITIES

Days at CHC are full to the BRIM with activities. We strongly believe that a combination of structured activities and choice provides the optimal growth experience.

SPORT

Swimming, Cricket, Badminton, Football, Tennis, Basketball Adventure

ARTS AND CRAFTS

jewellery making, slime, dreamcatchers, t-shirt painting, tie dye, photo frame making

Drama: plays, drama games, movie making, skits

DANCE AND DRAMA

From modern dance to 'horror' movie making, we will get their performance skills up and running!

ALL CAMP SPORT

Let's get the whole camp moving, together - it's sport, but FUN, games, crazy times, army camo.. everyday is different!

EVENING ACTIVITIES

These are all-camp events that are true camper favourites! Campfires, Lip Sync Night, Skits, Scavenger Hunts, Craft Nights, KAOS and much more! Oh.. and of of course, our world famous Black tie dinner and dance!

EXTERNAL WORKSHOPS

Each year, we have one or two external professionals come in to camp to teach us something new: from bushcraft and graffiti painting, to acrobatics and african drumming!

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

The following activities require an additional fee and you must sign up your child in advance:

- Horseback riding (min 5, max 7 girls per camp)
- Tennis (if sufficient n^os)





HORSE RIDING

You may register your child for Horseback Riding lessons for an additional fee. Riding lessons are taught at the Larkspur Equestrian Centre by their professionals. With over 20 years of experience, the Equestrian Centre takes small classes of up to 8 children.

Feel free to check their website for further information about the centre: <http://www.larkspur-equestrian.co.uk/>

The Horseback Riding lessons for our campers consist of three activity sessions taken as one of the campers' activity periods throughout their stay at camp. These are group lessons catered to your child's riding level: The Equestrian Centre accepts all riding levels - including children who have never ridden before. An evaluation ride on the first day of the session determines placement of campers by experience.

Campers are grouped by age and then experience and are encouraged to progress at their own pace. Campers participating in the riding programme are required to wear long trousers and shoes or boots that protect their ankles, with a heel - ideally, riding boots.

Riding helmets **MUST** be UK approved - sadly, helmets by Decathlon, unless they are the expensive models, are not high enough quality.

Please remember that if you sign up for riding lessons, you will have to fill out the riding form online provided by the Equestrian Centre, in addition to our camp forms. This form may be found on our website, along with ours:

<http://countryhousecamp.co.uk/en/parents-forms-handbook/>





GOLF

If there is sufficient interest, you may register your child for golf lessons for an additional fee. Golf lessons are taught at Oak Park Golf Club by their professionals. With a superb 27-hole golf course, driving range and practice area, they have the facilities to develop your child's game, whatever her ability.

Feel free to check their website for further information about the centre: <http://www.oakparkgolf.co.uk/>

The Golf lessons for our campers consist of three 2h sessions taken as one of the campers' activity periods throughout their stay at camp. These are group lessons catered to your child's golf ability. Oak Park Golf Club accepts all levels - including children who have never played before.

An evaluation on the first day of the session determines placement of campers by experience. Campers are grouped by age and then experience and are encouraged to progress at their own pace.

Campers participating in the Golf programme are not required to wear any clothing / equipment. Golf clubs will be provided.





TENNIS

Tennis is played at CHC free of charge as part of our sports programme. In addition, if there is sufficient interest, you may register your child for semi-private tennis lessons for an additional fee. Tennis lessons are taught in our tennis courts by a professional tennis coach.

Unlike golf or riding, all children will have access to the tennis courts and are welcome to play under the guidance of our Camp Leaders at other times.

This tennis add on is for children who wish to take semi private lessons with a tennis professional, in a group of 5 students max.

The tennis lessons consist of four 1.15 hour sessions taken as one of the campers' activity periods throughout their stay at camp. We cater to all levels including girls who have never played before.

An evaluation on the first day of the session determines placement of campers by experience.

Campers are grouped by age and then experience and are encouraged to progress at their own pace.





EXCURSIONS

The children will go on a day trip to central London, a day or half day out in a theme park or local town, and trips where they will take part in a number of exciting activities such as kayak, paddle boarding, climbing, bowling and laser tag, to mention just a few! For those that wish, we will arrange a camp out night too, in one of our bell tents - super fun!





MEALS

Children will be given three healthy, filling meals every day, as well as a morning and afternoon snack. All children will be expected to eat fruit and vegetables, and to be brave about trying new things!

On excursion days, we will provide a picnic lunch, usually consisting of a sandwich, crisps, a snack, a piece of fruit and a drink.



EXAMPLE BREAKFAST

Fruit
 Choice of cereals and milk
 Toast, butter and jam/ peanut butter
 Pastries/ waffles/ etc every 3 days
 Water, chocolate milk & juice

EXAMPLE LUNCH

BBQ chicken & sausages
 Baked potatoes
 Green beans/ peas
 Yoghurt
 Cheese
 Water

EXAMPLE SUPPER

Pasta with bolognese or homemade tomato sauce
 Salad
 Chocolate cake/ ice-cream
 Fruit
 Water



KEEPING IN TOUCH

You will receive updates and photos via whatsapp at least once every 3 days, and you are welcome to contact us as often as you wish, via email, mobile or whatsapp.

However, we only allow the children to call home once during camp. We arrange this phone call (NO video calls), half way through camp, usually on the weekend.

We will contact you beforehand to ensure the allocated time suits you. If for some reason you can't call that day/time, we can rearrange it. However, we encourage you to try to stick to the allocated day and time so that your child receives their phone call on the same day as all the other children.

A single phone call may seem a little harsh if residential summer camps are not a tradition in your home country and / or you were never a camper yourself... However, it is a tried and tested reality: calling home can bring on a bout of homesickness, when in fact, your child is doing really well!

Remember, you are sending your child to a safe, fun environment with the opportunity for growth.





CAMP RULES

Please speak in English at all times - its the way you will make friends with everyone!

Be kind, respectful and helpful to others. You all might be nervous, about making friends, being in a new place...make an effort to be friendly with everyone!

You must tidy your room, put away your own clothes & towels/ wash bags and make your beds each morning. There will be a prize for best room!

You should not be in your bedrooms during the day to play, only to change or go to the loo.

During quiet times, you may not shout and make lots of noise in your bedrooms. If you wake up before others, be very quiet and read/ rest until wake up.

Medicine and electronics (mobile phones, ipads, iphones, etc) must be handed to a staff member when you arrive.

No food may be eaten in bedrooms. If you do have sweets, make sure you share them with everyone around you - be kind!

No-one may enter the pool area without at least 2 adults present.

Look for a camp monitor for help if you have ANY problems or questions!

ABOVE ALL, HAVE FUN!



COUNTRY HOUSE CAMP
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