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Homestay Manual for Hosts

www.isebrighton.com

Hosting international students offers you the exciting and rewarding experience of inviting new cultures into your home and into your life!



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Introduction

A homestay experience gives you the opportunity to share your UK customs and daily life with a foreign student in a familiar home atmosphere. By no means is hosting an easy job. This is why we look for dedicated and patient individuals who recognise the gratification and wisdom that each challenge can bring.

Students choose homestay from a number of accommodation options to have a first-hand view of British culture and immerse themselves with native English speakers. This is often the first time away from home for many of our students.

They are looking for a home environment where they can practice their English language skills and interact with British people in a natural environment.

Each student, like each homestay, is unique. Along with the many rewards, there can be some challenges. This guide outlines the policies of the ISE Homestay Programme and will help you create a consistent and enjoyable homestay experience for your family and your students. As well as outlining the ISE standards for homestay, we offer you tips and advice on making the most of your homestay experience.

Please read through this manual carefully. If you need clarification or have any questions, please speak with ISE Accommodation staff.

ISE Accommodation Hosting Manual

Please read through and familiarise yourself with these guidelines.



Hosting students:

Students choose to live in homestay accommodation for the atmosphere, to learn and experience UK culture and to feel like being in a family home. When hosting an ISE student you must agree:

- to treat students as members of your own household, eating together (if meals are included) and sharing common living areas.
- to encourage students to speak English.
- to respect the different cultural backgrounds and try to be sensitive to the needs of students.
- to provide bedroom and common areas in clean and good condition.
- to provide privacy from members of the opposite sex.
- not to host more than 4 students in your home at any one time (including students from other schools).
- not to accommodate more than 2 students in the same bedroom unless expressly requested at the time of booking (rarely requested).
- not to accommodate more than one student of the same native tongue at the same time, except if requested or otherwise authorised.
- to use English and not any other language to communicate with students
- to use meal times as an opportunity to communicate with your student.



Arrivals, welcomes, pickups and goodbyes:

- Some students have their transport from the airport arranged by us whilst others make their own transport arrangements.
- An adult must always be available to welcome and receive a student when they first arrive.
- The act of meeting students serves as a friendly welcome and a positive start for a student with their homestay. Please start with a tour of the areas of the house the student will use so they are aware of their new living environment. It will help them settle and save you having to explain later.
- Offer a drink or snack to the student as they may have been travelling for many hours without proper food.
- We ask that hosts help their adult students find the quickest and cheapest route to and from school.

Group arrivals

- When hosting students from groups, the host may be expected to pick the student up from a designated meeting point e.g. in front of the school, the train station or Pool Valley to take them home.
- ISE will indicate at the time of booking when a pickup or drop off is required.



- Group pickup and drop off times will always be after 9am and before 10pm but if you are unable to pickup or drop off a student in your own vehicle, we the school will organise a taxi and the fare deducted from the host payment.



Bedroom:

- Every student should have a comfortable full-sized bed (3ft width minimum), adequate space for clothes storage, access to a writing desk or table and chair, sufficient lighting & heating, and a bin.
- Please note that sofa beds, camp beds, futons and bunk beds are not permitted for any student.
- Bed linen & towels should be provided and offered to be changed every week.
- Adequate heating should be provided in the student's room at no extra cost. Bear in mind that many students are accustomed to having a warm bedroom through the night. Students should be offered extra blankets if they're cold.
- Some students may not be accustomed to tidying their own clothes or making their own beds. You may have to explain they must do these jobs for themselves as the cleaning and tidying their room is their responsibility.
- If you have pets, check if the student is comfortable with the pet entering the student's bedroom and control the pet's movements if necessary.



Bathroom:

- Students should have access to the bathroom in the same way as the family/host, which must include at least a daily bath or shower.



Laundry:

- You should do a minimum of one wash load a week for the student or provide access to the washing machine, where appropriate.
- You may prefer to wash and dry the students' clothes with your own wash. Alternatively, please allow the student access to the machine and detergent to do his/her own washing separately.
- An iron should be available for students to use, if requested.



Meals:

- Many students are hosted on a Half Board basis, i.e. breakfast and evening meal from Monday to Friday. During the **weekend** Half Board students should also be provided with lunch.
- Students should have a good breakfast with perhaps fruit juice, cereal, and toast or bread, with jam, marmalade, coffee or tea with occasional cooked breakfast at weekends.
- The evening meal should always be a substantial dinner including meat, chicken or fish (or vegetarian option for vegetarian students).
- Check with your student to know if they intend to miss a meal.



- Bed & Breakfast (B&B) or Self Catering (S/C) students must be allocated space in the fridge and kitchen cupboards to store food.
- Students on B&B basis must be provided breakfast and like S/C students, must be allowed access to the kitchen to prepare evening meals.
- See “**Chores**” section for kitchen cleaning.
- Some students may request a halal diet, which is no pork and only halal meat.



Telephone:

- Use of telephone by students is a common cause of misunderstanding. Some students have no idea how expensive it is and they may be used to free local calls at home.
- A reasonable number of incoming calls to a landline should be allowed.
- The student should always check with the host family when it is convenient to use the house phone.
- Students must never use your telephone without asking your permission first.
- Mobile phones are the main use for calls made by the student. The school gives UK SIM cards to students who need them, free of charge.
- Discuss with your student appropriate calling times so they know not to disturb the household late at night, calling family or friends in a different time zone!



Wi-Fi:

- A Wi-Fi internet connection is required 24/7 and should be made available to students. Please give them the Wi-Fi password to use on arrival.



Keys:

- All students should be given a front door key and freedom to come and go in accordance with your agreed curfew times. Students cannot share keys as they often have different daily routines.
- If students lose the key, they may be charged up to a maximum of £10 per key. Please explain any rules regarding keys and locks and ensure that address details are not included on the key ring. You cannot charge the student or school the cost of changing the locks in the event of a key being lost (see insurance).
- Make sure the student returns the key when leaving.



Leisure time:

- Students expect to chat and socialise with you for part of their day. Chatting at home offers opportunities for you to learn about each other and improves his/her English.



- Students should be included in any family activities, especially any taking place in the home. Please include or invite your student to any suitable event or activity that they would be able to join you on.
- Inform your student of any local leisure cultural activities that are coming up such as the annual Brighton Festival, sports clubs & gyms or local parks.
- ISE's Social Activities programme offers students a variety of evening activities (theatres, discos, pub nights, school parties, sport activities etc) as well as weekend trips within the UK and Europe.



Damage and Insurance cover:

- Hosts should have household insurance that covers accidental damage, and should inform their insurance company that they host students to ensure that they are covered.
- We accept no responsibility for any loss or damage directly or indirectly caused by any students hosted by you.
- Students may be expected to pay for any damage caused through carelessness or negligence but not for genuine accidents.



Safety at home:

- Clearly explain the use of electrical equipment, any safety rules you have at home and about fire exits to students.
- Expect students to use electrical adapters in your home.
- We give emergency information to students in our Student Handbook, but please check students know the UK emergency number by asking them if they know how to call the police, fire-brigade & ambulance: 999
- We require a Gas Safety Certificate for your property dated within the last 12 months, renewed each year.
- Before hosting students you are required to undertake a **fire risk assessment** of your home. We offer a [template](#) to assist you.



Notice of early departure:

- If you wish the student to leave earlier than arranged, you should give seven days' notice to the accommodation officer so we can arrange a suitable alternative.
- Due to circumstances beyond our control (such as visa refusals) students may be cancelled at any time before they arrive. If this happens we will endeavour to provide a replacement where possible.
- If your student does return home for any reason earlier than expected, you will be paid until the student leaves.
- Please call the school or emergency number if you request a student leave the home immediately. Avoid a confrontation with the student if there is an escalating problem. We will assist in relocating them.



Deposits & retainers:

- Do not ever ask your student for a deposit of any kind
- At your discretion, we can arrange a payment of approximately £20 per week retainer if the student wishes to keep their belongings in your house during any holidays spent away from your home.
- Never ask the student for money, nor exchange money directly even if the student offers.

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Under 18s:

As of summer 2020 ISE Brighton has raised our minimum enrolment age of students from 16 to 18 years old. As such you will no longer be requested to host under 18s though if you are hosting under 18s from another school, you should not accept an adult student from us at the same time.



Safeguarding Students: Vulnerable Adults

As good practice you can complete a one hour online training for Basic Safeguarding Training, the cost of which (about £15) will come out of a future booking.

Vulnerable Adult Definition

Any person who is unable to protect themselves from exploitation or unable to take care of themselves may be considered a vulnerable person. This includes language students as they may be exploited due to a limited command of the English language and insufficient awareness of what is "normal" custom in the UK.

Please contact the school immediately if you suspect your student may have been exploited or taken advantage of during their stay in the UK.

Concerns and how to report them

The school takes every possible precaution to ensure the safety of our students and prevent any abuse that may occur. It can be difficult to identify abuse as it has various forms. Below are some typical indicators to be mindful of:

- unexplained injuries; another student telling you of their concern about a fellow student; sexually explicit behaviour in games / activities; serious distrust of adults or other students; difficulty in making friends / socialising with other students; sudden changes in personality and behavioural changes; changes in dress which may be covering up bruises etc.
- How to react if a student talks to you about possible abuse: Remain calm, accessible and receptive, listen carefully without interrupting, communicate with the student in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. Be aware of the non-verbal messages you are giving, such as body language and facial expressions; make it clear that you are taking them seriously, and reassure them that they are doing the right by telling you, and that they should not feel guilty. Let them know that you are going to do



everything you can to help them and what may happen as result. **Do not** promise to keep the information a secret.

Procedure to follow if abuse is suspected

- If you have any concerns about the welfare of a student staying in your home, please contact ISE without delay: beth@isebrighton.com / 01273 384800 or on the emergency out of hours number 07554233233. ISE's Safeguarding Lead will take appropriate action, which may involve external agencies and contacting parents/ guardians.



“Prevent”

- As a Language School, we have a duty to inform all our employees and homestay families about PREVENT, which was introduced by the UK government as part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Prevent is about safeguarding our students to keep them both safe and within the law. The Prevent duty is not about preventing students from having political and religious views and concerns *per se*, rather preventing those view from becoming extreme. The government has defined extremism as ‘vocal or active opposition to fundamental British core values.’ The four fundamental British core values are:
 - 1) Democracy
 - 2) The rule of law
 - 3) Individual liberty
 - 4) Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and of those without faith.
- As a homestay host for ISE you, along with the staff at school, have a duty to be aware that vulnerable adults or children may be drawn in to extremism or are in danger of being radicalised. Students may be vulnerable or susceptible as they will be out of their natural environment, culturally and geographically and could experience difficulty interacting socially.
- If you are aware of any student being drawn into any kind of terrorism as a consequence of radicalisation, then you need to report it, no matter how trivial your concerns may be.
- If you would like to gain more awareness, please go to the following link, where you will find an online course. You will be given a certificate on completion of the course:
http://course.ncalt.com/Channel_General_Awareness/01/index.html



References

- **Two character references** (not from a family member) should be provided for all hosts. We offer a [template](#) you can use.



Medical Treatment & Emergency:

- Your local GP / family doctor should be able to see your student. Please give the name and address of the nearest surgery to the student.
- Some students may have to pay for medicine or treatment according to their nationality or medical cover except for emergency treatments or infectious diseases.
- If you have any medical concerns or other problems with students, contact the office: 01273 384800 / 01273 700666.
- In emergencies (night-time or during school closures) call our 24-hour emergency contact number 07554233233.
- This number is for an emergency only (e.g. your student has been involved in an accident, missed her/his plane or transfer, has been arrested or has gone missing).



Registering for a GP and a bank account

Longer term students may likely register for medical treatment with a GP or open a bank account registered at the home address.

If opening a local bank account, they will receive mail by post at the address. If you prefer not to allow students to receive post or give the address to a bank, doctor's surgery etc please notify us at the time of registering as a host.



Visits from The British Council

Every 3-5 years The British Council will carry out inspections at ISE Brighton, including visits to sample Homestay accommodation where ISE students are staying, as part of their quality assurance inspection criteria. They may ask to visit your home, during the time of inspection. It is a short visit in which they will ask to see the room where the students stay and have a general chat with you. We ask for your co-operation during this time in allowing the inspectors to make a short visit to your home.

Out of hours (24hr) Emergency telephone number

You can reach the school *accommodation officer* outside of school opening hours by telephone or text message at 07480 446767, or our 24 hour school emergency number at 07554233233.

Finally...

Please contact us if you require clarification on any of the guidelines in this document.

Thank you!