



Host Family Guide

Dear Host,

This guide is designed to help and guide you as host family working with us.

Contact Information

Please contact the administrator on the details below:

Devon Educational Holidays

Registered Office:

48 Queens Street

Exeter, Devon. EX4 3SR

Registered in England and Wales

Mobile Emergencies only: 07513871084

Email: admin@devonhomestay.com

Web: www.devonhomestay.com

Welcome

We would like to welcome you to the team, staff, guest, students and host all form part of our team.

About Devon Educational Holidays

We have over 10 years of experience in the industry of overseas and UK student educational visits to Exeter, Devon. We are dedicated to delivering the highest quality educational programme, homestay accommodation for any UK and overseas student/guest whom will be travelling to Exeter for various reasons for study, travel, work placements. Our services offered to our guest/student include:

Mini stays (3 to 4 nights)

Homestay accommodation

Academic year stays (Private Fostering)

Summer School and much more

About our students

We currently welcome students mainly from the EU, the students you will host for us are mainly from Spain, Italy, Czech Republic, France and Saudi Arabia. The students visit the UK to improve their English and to learn about our British culture and way of life.

Our students range from the ages of 12-18. However, we also offer accommodation for age 18+, Group Leader's, students studying at Exeter University, RD & E Wonford or other English schools in Exeter.

Welcoming our students into your home

Providing a homestay away from home for a student/guest can be one of the most rewarding things a host(s) can offer. Our experience has taught us that the key to a successful hosting experience is an understanding and mutual respect between host (s) and student. This will be outlined in our guidelines below.

What does our student/guest expect?

We are expected to provide the best possible homestay experience for our students during their stay, which we know, can only be achieved with the support of our host families. The students are choosing to live in a homestay as an option as this will give them a warm welcome, home comforts and the opportunity to practice their English with British families, giving the student's parents piece of mind that a family environment will bring a home from home experience during their holiday. Just remember they are not just renting a room in your home, they are anticipating being treated as one of the family, this is what makes a homestay experience successful. The student whom you have from us, should be treated with the same kindness, respect and the same discipline, as you would show your own children. It is important for you and the student to become familiar with the house rules and normal daily routine as soon as possible.

What your student's room needs:

We do we expect a host to offer the following:

- A warm, comfortable bedroom with adequate heating, lighting, a bed, a desk or workspace (optional), drawers **or** wardrobe.
- A good standard of cleanliness and hygiene with bed linen and bath towels included
- Internet access
- The standard arrangement for Bed & Breakfast or Half board (mini stays Full Board)
- To use the shower daily
- For 18+ to be given a key during their longer stays

HOST FAMILY GUIDELINES

EXPECTATION OF OUR FAMILIES

Other students in the home

Our students do expect to be the only students in their group at your home, although if agreed by us it will be fine for other students to stay, providing you have enough shower and toilet facilities. It is also preferable that any other student in the home does not speak the same language, unless they have travelled with them. This will need to be agreed by us in the first instance.

PLEASE INFORM US OF ANY OTHER STUDENTS YOU MAY HAVE FROM OTHER SCHOOL'S, SO WE CAN ENSURE THAT WE COMPLY WITH THE STUDENT'S BOOKING CONDITIONS THIS AVOIDS COMPLAINTS.

Reservation/Bookings with our host

Our reservation process will normally be offered to you by phone or email in the first instance. We will give you details of the student stay, price, dates and arrival times. Once you have accepted the booking, we will send you a text nearer to the arrival date as a polite reminder. It is imperative to advise us at your earliest opportunity if you are unable to have a student on any of the date's, we have given to you please. We always try to allocate dates by November for the following year.

Arrivals and Departures

All families are required to meet their students/guest on arrival, we will always advise you where the pickup location is, sometimes there are delays which we unfortunately cannot foresee, this can be at the airport, the transfer etc. Sometimes, there is a delay, as some countries cannot apply for a visa until they have arrived in the UK, but of course, we will keep in touch with anything you need to know.

On the first day depending on the stay/student you have, we will ask you to take your student/guest to the necessary pick up/drop off points. If you are unable to transport your student at any time, you must tell us beforehand of arrival, but please be aware the cost of any taxi or transport arranged must be met by you.

First Day

Please always accompany your student/guest or leaders on their first day. Students will make their own way to and from your home after their first day on a stay of only 7 days or more.

Our mini stay group and some of our summer groups always require a drop off and pick up daily to the school or location, but of course we always try to pair you up with another family close by too! Please do exchange contact details with your student/guest in the first instance, this enables you to keep in touch.

Cancellations/Removals of students/guest

Occasionally cancellations or removal of student/guest can be unforeseen before arrival or just after arrival, this is very unfortunate, 'we' as an Agent do ask our providing Agents to let us know at least 21 days before an arrival date if this occurs at any stage of a booking.

Unfortunately, we cannot compensate you financially if at any time a cancellation or removal occurs. Should a student/guest need to leave before their original departure date from your family, you will be paid up to and including the final night that they (sleep) in your accommodation. If you require to give notice to a student/guest, then we do ask for at least 14 days' notice so we can find another suitable host for the student/guest.

Enhance DBS Application

This is a UK requirement for a host whom works as a host family for any company, the DBS certificate involves regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults, Safeguarding is at the heart of a DBS therefore it is a compulsory requirement. These can be done online within 14 days or we can have a copy of a work DBS certificate if it is valid within the last 2 years.

UPDATE Service

An update service is now available too, where the host can update their own certificate yearly, the website for this service is <http://www.gov.dbs-update-service>, it is an online subscription, that allows applicants to keep their DBS certificates up to date.

Hosting students from another language school and hosting privately

Please, on all occasions tell us if you are hosting any other students from another language school or have any lodgers 18+ living in your home when we are offering you students from our school. Some of our groups/agents prefer to be on their own in your home, therefore it is best to be open and upfront in the beginning as this can avoid awkward removal of any student from us or the other school. Please remember if we are allocating you any of our students whom are under 16-year-old, YOU CAN NOT HOST 18+ in your home at the same time.

IMPORTANT

If you are ever contacted direct by one of our students/parents/agent/friends/family whom has stayed with you through our introduction, you must tell us **immediately**. If it comes to our attention you are hosting one of our students on a **private basis unless otherwise agreed**, we will contact you to formalise the arrangement through our school or we will remove you as a host from our school and inform any necessary parties. We do have an obligation of duty of care to you the host and to the student/guest.

Meals

Try to keep the meals as simple and varied as possible and a well-balanced diet. Some students have special dietary requirements and allergies, we will inform you on allocation of your student if there are any special requirements.

Special Diets we get asked for:

Gluten Free

Nut Allergy – IMPORTANT Please check all labels or ask the student what they can eat

Vegan

Vegetarian

Lactose

We have put a choice of menus on our website to help you with some variety of meals

Half /Full Board meal requirements and mealtimes

Full board

Breakfast, pack lunch and an **evening meal every day

or

Half board

A light breakfast and evening meal.

**Sometimes the student will stay out for dinner, but we do ask them to tell you in advance or text you, so this avoids wasting food. Just give them a nudge to remind you if they are not home.

Before ARRIVAL – Food Purchase

Important - Never buy any food before your student arrives as on occasions due to unforeseen circumstances they do cancel or do not turn up and we cannot compensate any money. Sharing mealtimes is an important role during your students stay, as it makes the student feel like part of the family. Although, we do however, understand that when a student's arrival time or pick up is 21.00pm (mini stays for example) it maybe perhaps too late for a family with young children to eat, but please do try sitting with them and ask about their day to keep up the interaction, after all it is only for 15 minutes and they do come to learn English from the host.

Self-Catering – 18+

Bed & Breakfast (continental only provided by host) please try to make a space for their items, like a cupboard and a small part of the fridge/freezer too. Please also work out the best time for your student/guest to cook, so this fits around your family times, suiting you both.

We will only be involved with the student for the first 8-12 weeks of their stay unless the student prefers us to be of assistance during their stay. After the 8-12 weeks you and the student can make a private arrangement only if agreed by us. This will relinquish all other responsibilities from us if this is agreed upon.

House Rules – Laundry, Cleaning and Hygiene

We expect the students bed linen and towels to be washed and changed at least once/twice a week, this is the hosts responsibility. Please discuss laundry expectations with your student/guest upon arrival. If you are happy for them to use your washing facilities, please show them how, or if you prefer to help with the washing, please show them where they can leave it for you.

Telephone, Internet, Money and Friends

Please explain to your student on arrival the rules of your house, we have a good guideline of house rules on our website for the guest and the host too! All homes will need access to Internet and Wi-Fi, as this is a preferred way of communication with friends and families. Please check with your provider you have the right contract for browsing the internet on a regular basis, as you do not want an unexpected bill.

DO NOT let your student use your home phone, most students/guests have laptops and mobiles. All computers and devices should be password protected in your own home for your own safety, do not let students use your personal items without prior permission. Students need to be reminded to keep their monies and passport safe within your home to avoid possible loss. Please give a receipt for anything you hold or look after for safety for them.

Medical Treatment

We have a 24-hour contact number: 07513871084, in the event of a genuine emergency only. If a medical emergency arises, your first point of contact is:

Emergency services 999/111

or your doctor before you contact us.

All students are entitled to use our Walk-in NHS Centre or A&E, or if they are staying with you more than 3 months they will be able to register with your doctor or dentist as a temporary visitor under your address.

Student medical Insurance

It is a paramount condition to us when agreeing to take students that all students must travel with a medical or travel insurance. The host or Devon Educational Holidays are not responsible.

Initial safety checklist for students

When students are new to a city, it can be easy to get lost. We have compiled a simple checklist to help you help them stay safe. Please go through the following with them:

- *Write down your address and telephone number*
- *Write down the location and name of the nearest bus stop to your home and ensure they know the bus numbers going to and from college/town*
- *Make sure they have a house key 18+ and keep it safe*
- *Make sure they tell you where they are going and what time they are coming home*
- *Give them our emergency number*

Health & Safety in the Home

Please explain the safety in your own home to the student/guests. Remind family members not to keep any medicines out, in sight, also to ensure they are kept away from students/guests.

Please explain how to operate showers, ovens, washing machines, home alarms, safes and any other household items they may use. With regards to keeping your home safe, please ensure they know how to lock the door and how to keep your home safe and secure when entering or leaving the house.

Gas Safety

All Homestay providers need to produce a yearly Gas Safety Certificate and have a fire risk assessment done on recruitment.

Smoke Detectors/Carbon

All Homestay providers are expected to have up to date smoke detectors fitted throughout, to ensure safety and prevention of fire.

Risk Assessment

Homestay Providers must have a fire risk assessment, and this needs to be shown and explained to your students upon arrival, as well as other risks in the home.

Transporting Students

You must collect your student/s and drop them for arrival and departures and their first days. All longer-term students/guest will make their own way if over 18. It is now imperative that all vehicles must have valid insurance, mot and in a safe roadworthy state and to advise your insurance company you do have students travelling with you on occasions, (this doesn't cost any extra) on your insurance.

Name Cards

We have now produced name cards for all Host families, which will be given upon arrival of your students. These cards will always need to be kept safely in your car and shown to our meet and greet when collecting your students;

Collections of Students

Please always go to the Coach/Station/Railway/Airport to receive your student/guest when required for safeguarding reasons, we cannot just let the children run over to you, for safety their safety.

Notice or Removal of student

If you wish to terminate the arrangement of your student, a week or 14 days termination notice is required, (this will be determined on how long the student is with you for) you must appreciate, that it can take up to a week to find another suitable host family. With regards to any payment, we can either deduct the monies from any payment due to you or you (the host) will be required to pay any monies due back to the student/school.

Our Family Welfare Officer is always on hand to resolve any issues which may arise during your students stay, usually any disagreements can be resolved quickly with our help. On occasions we do need to move a student due to unforeseen circumstances beyond anyone's control, if this happens you will only be paid for the evening's they have slept in your home with no compensation unfortunately.

Payments

We will make payments to you via our BACS system directly, each group payment will vary according to the contract at the time of acceptance of the booking. Any changes on arrival or departure, which affects your payment, will be explained to you, we will only pay you while the student/s are in your accommodation. Under no circumstance should you discuss the payments you receive from our school, with other families or the students themselves, if this does happen and we are informed we will remove you from our family database as this information is confidential between us, you and the student.

Yearly Visits and unannounced visits

We do need to ensure yearly checks and paperwork are adhered to by BC and we do sometimes do an unannounced visit on occasions, please don't be alarmed as we are only adhering to us regulations to keep up to date.

IMPORTANT

It is not acceptable to make a private arrangement with It is not acceptable to make any private arrangement with our student/guest/friend/family/colleague/agent/school whilst they have been placed with your family through our introduction from our school.

Payments made to you

Payments are scheduled as below:

Mini Stays – Night before departure

Summer School – 3rd week of stay

Longer Term – Monthly on the same date

Tax/HMRC

The income you receive from hosting students is classified as taxable by HMRC. You are responsible to declare this yearly, under rent a room agreement with HMRC. For more advise/information go to www.gov.uk the tax-free amount for 2019/20 is £7500 per household we can supply a yearly statement if required.

Safeguarding Policies - Purpose and Aims

The purpose of our safeguarding policy is to provide a secure framework for the workforce in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those children/young people who attend our setting.

The policy aims to ensure that:

All our children are safe and protected from harm. Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable children to feel safe and adopt safe practices. Staff, children, Leaders, visitors, volunteers and parents are aware of the expected behaviours' and the settings legal responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our children.

Child Protection Training Video on our website

All our host are required to watch the Child Protection Training Video either upon or before our visit to your home. A signature for a declaration will be required to say that you have understood and acknowledge you have watched the training and read all our hosting agreements and guidelines. The training is to ensure the safety of everyone and to understand yours and our duty of care; we are here to help if you have any queries or questions at any time.

Data Protection and Privacy Policy

All data provided will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Our privacy policy is accessible via our website, this will give you guidance on how we deal with data provided.

Damages and Insurance

Please note we cannot accept liability or responsibility for damage to your property caused by your students. You should ensure you have household insurance that covers any accidental damage by your students/guest. It may be worth insuring valuables in case of breakage, theft, loss, we also recommend you keep valuables locked away for your own security. Fair wear and tear should not be charged to student's, but they may be expected to pay for any damage they may have caused through carelessness. In case of any disputes it is imperative that you inform your home or rental insurers that you have a paying guest/student in your home.

You and Devon Educational Holidays – working together

As a host, we regard you as an essential partner in the pursuit of our main aim – which is to give every one of our students a happy, successful and unforgettable experience.

Support from us

Your role to us is vital and we want you to feel an active part of it too.

We appreciate you deserve the full support and back up from us to help you fulfil your role. In addition to this handbook, we are always available to discuss any issues you have, whether by email, phone or face to face, all contact details are printed on page 2 of this booklet. We also value any suggestions or tips for successful hosting you might have which we can pass on to other hosts.

In our experience, the key to success is having a genuine interest in the students, a willing commitment and patience and above a sense of humour!

Keeping us in the picture

If anything changes in your home circumstances or you have holidays booked, we must be informed on any occasion, after all we are here to work with together, we can help on all occasions. Also, if you have any problems during your student/s stay, please contact us during office hours or by email and we are always here to help.

Students Under 16

Most of our students are 16 and under, you as a host are “in loco parentis”, this means that you and/or the school/college must know where the child is every day. Our students will have their own rules set by their parents but must adhere to us or your ‘the host’ rules. Please make sure that each student can contact you at any time in case of an emergency.

Specific requirements are:

- No student aged under 16 to be given a key
- All students under 16 are not allowed out at any time or day without permissions
- No student under 16 must be placed with 18+
- Under 16 should not be left at home alone

Top tips for successful hosting

Please inform your student of your own house rules straight away on arrival, or the first day, especially if you have a longer stay student this avoids any confusion of what you expect of the student. This will prevent future misunderstandings, as it is so much harder to implement any new house rules if your student has been a part of the family for a long time. See below for tips.

Let your student know whether it is acceptable to help themselves to food or not

When your student arrives, let them know what time you usually have dinner, showers etc. or what is the best time around your family

Make sure they understand that they must call you in advance if they are eating out with friends or if they are going to be late home

Only allow students to have a door key if they are 18+ if you as a host does not want to hand over a door key, then this is fine too

Please ensure that your student has your address and telephone number in case of any

emergency and our phone number too. This is particularly important for the first few days, in case students get lost.

Please note it is important that the door key is kept in a separate place from the students copy of your address

If your student has a mobile phone, make sure you have their phone number in case of emergencies. Do not allow pets to enter the student bedrooms at any time, unless the student asks themselves. Please also be aware that some students feel very uneasy if animals are allowed in the kitchen whilst food is being prepared

Please do not lend your student money at any time, as we will not be responsible if the student does not pay it back

Breakages sometimes happen, try to avoid leaving valuable items where a student can accidentally knock it over!

English UK Code of Practice

For providers of homestay accommodation for English Language educational Students

As a family, you agree to abide to the following:

- Encourage the student to speak English as much as possible in your home
- Encourage the student to feel at home and to treat him/her as a member of the family
- Not to host another student of the same native language at the same time unless by a special arrangement with the students and the school
- To provide clean and comfortable student room, meeting the requirements laid down by British Council. www.britishcouncil.org
- To provide a home environment in which it is possible for the student to carry on his/her English studies
- To provide the student with a balanced and appropriate diet when necessary
- To show due concern for the welfare, safety and security of the student during his/her stay
- To give the student reasonable and regular access to the bathroom and laundry facilities
- To maintain close liaison with the student's school/college so we can resolve any problems
- To respect the student's difference cultural background and to be sensitive to the need of the student, including their need for privacy
- To ensure the student knows how to travel to the school and to accompany them on their first day
- To provide reliable internet access that the student can use daily
- To take responsibility for informing HMRC about your income for hosting our students
- To provide us with an annual Gas Safety Certificate
- To ensure that for any breakages/accidental damage to items within your home, that your home insurance will cover this
- To ensure pets do not harm students at any time
- To ensure the student is not out without supervision if under 18

IF YOU DO NOT ADHERE TO THESE GUIDELINES, WE ARE UNABLE TO USE YOU AS A HOST FAMILY