

Professional Code of Conduct

Devon Educational Holidays recognises that most host families who provide care for our students act professionally and in the best interests of the student. There may be occasions when there are interactions with students which can lead to tensions and misunderstandings.

To help manage these situations in the interests of the student and members of the host family, the following guidance should be adhered to as per the Safer Recruitment 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' (October 2015). The guidance outlines what is expected in terms of professional behaviour, provides clear advice about what constitutes unacceptable behaviour, what constitutes safe practice and behaviours to avoid.

There may be times when host family members are presented with a situation not covered by this guidance and are required to use their own professional judgement. In such circumstances host family members should always report the matter to a member of staff on the telephone (during office hours – 01392 581187) or on the emergency telephone (out of office hours – 07513871084).

To assist host families in creating a safe and secure environment for our students:

- Host family members should be aware of their own conduct and ensure that their professional practice is clear and unambiguous
- Host family members must never use physical punishment or restrain a Devon Educational Holidays student, unless they are in danger or hurting themselves or somebody else. In that case, the host family must report the incident to us immediately.
- Host family members should ensure that they deal with students in an open and transparent way, not showing favouritism and by treating students respectfully and fairly irrespective of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
- Host families should not give gifts to students on a regular basis and should not give gifts of any significant value. Similarly, such gifts should not be given to the families of students as this could be interpreted as a gesture to groom or bribe a student. Where a reward is given to a pupil this should be in accordance with agreed practice, consistent with the behaviour policy and not based on favouritism
- Where host families become aware that a student may be trying to form an inappropriate relationship with a member of the host family or Devon educational Holidays representative, the host family should report any indications and/or incidents to a member of staff. Host Family members should always maintain professional boundaries and implement an action plan to manage the concern(s) raised. The plan should respond sensitively to the student and host family

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in order to maintain the dignity of all, while being regularly monitored and reviewed

- Outside of times when a student is staying with a host family, they should not provide or encourage the student to use their personal contact details to students for example email address, home or mobile telephone numbers or details of web-based identities. In summary this means host families should not encourage contact with students for non-hosting reasons. If students locate these by any other means and attempt to contact or correspond with the host family outside of an event, the host family should not respond and must report the matter to their line manager. Students and staff should communicate for professional reasons using the company email addresses and telephone numbers.
- A host family can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection. Host family members are advised to avoid physical contact with students as even when well intentioned, this contact may be misconstrued by the student, an observer or any person to whom this action is described. There may also be cultural, gender sensitive or religious reasons about touching which the host family member is not aware of. Host family members must be aware that any physical contact with a student may need to be explained and would be open to scrutiny.
- Where a student is upset or distressed (for example due to homesickness) remember that sympathy and help can be given using kind words. Also, sitting with the student and listening to them until they feel better can also be of great comfort.
- Host families should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times and in cases where this may be unavoidable (for example a young child who has fallen over, makes physical contact with the primary carer first or is crying with homesickness), we would recommend asking a child if physical comfort is wanted before giving it. However, in the majority of cases it would not be appropriate and we do not recommend physical contact, and would encourage comforting the child as detailed above.
- Host family members are advised to report to us and record situations which may give rise to concern, including physical contact with students as a result of administering first aid.
- Any (contact or non-contact activity) sexual behaviour (including grooming of a child so sexual abuse can take place), by a member of a host family with or towards a pupil is unacceptable and could be a matter for criminal proceedings. Students are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour, and by additional legal provisions depending on their age and understanding.
- Host family members should ensure that only photography, videos or images of students are taken with the consent of the student and in relation to the purpose of the visit or trip. Parental consent is detailed in the Parent Handbook. Photographs, videos and images should only be published where such consent has been obtained (please note our terms and conditions also ask parents to let us know if they do NOT give their consent so unless you hear otherwise, a Devon

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Educational Holidays student's parents have consented).

- You may wish to take family pictures that include your student and this is fine as long as the student has agreed that this is ok for them, but please kindly refrain from posting any family pictures that include your student online.
- Under no circumstances should host family members take photographs, videos or images of students without consent or without the students knowing that the images are being taken. Host family members should always be able to justify images of students in their possession and avoid making images in one to one situations.
- Any host family that uses CCTV, whether inside or outside their property, must adhere to the [ICO CCTV Code of Practice](#)

The key is having a clear and lawful need for the recording and to be able to demonstrate why CCTV is appropriate to meet that need, taking into account an individual's right to privacy and what the CCTV user has done to ensure the recordings are no more intrusive than they need to be and that there is a clear system to ensure any data obtained is adequately protected, in line with the usual data protection principles (just as for written data). It is essential that the ICO guidelines have been adhered to and that the host family has a paper trail to demonstrate this. Host families using

CCTV are expected to remain up to date with any changes in this Code of Practice.

- Host family members should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium to inappropriate or indecent images. If such images are found by the host family, an immediate referral should be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Host families should avoid one to one situation in an enclosed room and wherever possible should ensure there is visual access and/or an open door.

Where an unplanned situation presents which involves a host family member providing support to students with medical conditions or administering medicines, this should be reported to a member of staff on the telephone (during office hours – 01392 581187) or on the emergency telephone. In an emergency, the host family member should immediately call 999 and request urgent medical assistance.

The Devon Educational Holidays Whistle Blowing Policy provides guidance to host families on how to deal with malpractice where there is concern for the safety of children within a company. Devon Educational Holidays Safeguarding and Child Protection policies outline to host family members the correct procedures for reporting and recording concerns and incidents.