

## HOMESTAY ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS GUIDELINES

If you are interested in providing Homestay accommodation for our students, please read the following guidelines. We hope these provide you with an introduction to how we work with Homestay providers. If you require further information or to arrange for us to view your property, please contact us.

### **The Basics:**

All students need a room with adequate space to hang their clothes, some drawer space, adequate lighting and heating, hot water for showers, and a table or desk where they can work. They will need breakfast (this can be 'help yourself' if they are shown clearly where everything is, and what they are allowed to take), evening meal, and a packed lunch at weekends and bank holidays. The packed lunch should include: sandwiches (check if the student is a vegetarian), a chocolate bar or similar snack, a drink (very important), and a piece of fruit. Many foreigners are not very keen on crisps, so it's probably worth checking this before you include them.

It is usual to do one load of normal washing per week for the student. If the student wants to wash some clothes for him/herself, we ask hosts to make sure the student knows where to do it, what with, and where they can dry their clothes.

We normally suggest that it is reasonable to allow the student to make a 'Collect Call' when they arrive, and for their family to be able to phone them. International calling cards can be purchased and, when using the 0800 number, there will be no charge to your phone. Most families say 'no calls except *quick* ones to Cambridge friends.'

### **Living with your student(s):**

Students stay with homestay families for a variety of reasons, but one thing they all want is to be made welcome and treated as one of the family. As hosts, you should find time to talk to your student(s), and let them join in with the family activities as far as possible and share the living areas and meal times with the students. Homestay families sometimes complain that students don't communicate – but do try to remember that they may well have limited English and be afraid of making mistakes. This applies to family life in general, too. Students often feel very unsure about what is expected of them, what is permitted, and what is forbidden. If you take the time to explain even the things that seem very obvious to you, like where to put the dirty laundry, or when it is okay to have a shower, you will help your student(s) to settle in quickly and you will both enjoy their stay much more.

### **Transport:**

We try to encourage students to use the bus as far as possible. They can buy a weekly Megarider ticket on the bus for £14-£15. We will provide the student with maps, information, and a bus timetable. It would help enormously if you could show your student(s) where to find the bus stop on their first morning in Cambridge.

## Accommodation:

We may be required to carry out DBS (formerly CRB) checks before placing any students with you. You will be required to complete a fire safety assessment and return it to ABC. You must ensure that English is the main language of communication within the Homestay property.

We expect homes to be clean, welcoming, provide a safe environment, and for homestay accommodation providers to assist students within reason. For example, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Bed linen and towels should be changed every week and an adequate supply of duvets or blankets provided.
- Student bedrooms and bathroom must be cleaned at least once a week.
- Ensure that any household rules are made clear to the student on the first day in order to avoid any problems.
- Please do not allow any family pets into the student bedroom unless requested by the student.
- Ensure there is adequate hot water, heating and lighting for your student
- If a packed lunch is required, please show the student where they can find it in the morning
- Students should be offered lunch on the weekend if they are at home
- Please continue to check in with your student and contact us if you have any concerns

We will re-inspect the accommodation at least once every two years.

## Payment:

All of our payments are made through the BACS system of direct deposit into your bank account. Please ensure that we have the correct information for your account and update us if you change banks or account details. Payments are made every two weeks on a Friday or, in the case of our Group Study Holidays students, on the first working day after the group departs.

## Booking procedure:

Once we receive your agreement to place a student with you, we will send a confirmation letter by post to confirm all of the details of the student's stay. Before agreeing to accept a student, please ensure that there will be an adult available to welcome the student on their arrival day and, if the student is under 16, that a responsible adult will be at home overnight and when the student is in the house. The majority of our Homestay students arrive on a Sunday and depart on a Saturday. We will confirm the arrival and departure days of students at time of booking.

If you are forced to cancel a booking, we request that you inform us immediately so that alternative arrangements can be made. Unfortunately, some bookings may be cancelled due to unforeseeable circumstances such as visas being denied, personal or family illness, or other emergencies. Payment **will not** be given for students who do not arrive.

We ask hosts to inform us if they will have more than four students staying in their home at any time. We must also be informed if you will have students of the same nationality staying in your home at any time.

Homestay is provided for current ABC students only and should not be extended on a private basis.

## Complaints Procedure:

Whilst we try our utmost to make sure that you are happy working with us, there may be times when you are not satisfied with something that has happened either with your students or ABC.

In the first instance you should discuss your concerns with an ABC staff member. They will take ownership of your complaint and try their best to resolve it in an informal and timely manner.

If your concerns are not resolved, you may wish to make a formal complaint. This should be done in writing and addressed to the school directors who will take ownership of your complaint and try to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If your concerns are not resolved at this stage, you can address your complaint in writing to the Accreditation Body for Language Services (ABLS) who will take an independent view on the situation.

In order for complaints to be followed up quickly and effectively, ABLS will need:

- a written complaint received directly from the complainant.
- to be informed as to whether the complainant has already tried to resolve the problem with ABC direct and, if so, the response he or she has received.
- to state whether the complainant is happy for the complaint to be copied to ABC.

Please post or email your complaint to:

ABLS, PO Box 316, Great Yarmouth, NR30 9EP

[info@ablsaccreditation.co.uk](mailto:info@ablsaccreditation.co.uk)

**Please note:** ABC cannot be held responsible for any damage or loss caused by any student placed with you. You should ensure that you have adequate insurance in place, and that all interested parties, eg bank/building society, have been informed that you are hosting students.