

## **St. George's School of English**

### **Accommodation Arrangements between Host Families and Students**

Students always remember the kindness of the people and the cleanliness and comfort of the place where they stayed. Our *Accommodation Officer* looks after students and finds accommodation with English families, or if requested in a guesthouse or a hotel, near the school. Students should be made welcome and happy wherever they are staying.

#### **English Host Families**

We recommend homestay because it is the best way to practise English and experience the British lifestyle. **St George's School of English** chooses their families with great care, making sure the houses are **clean and warm** and that the family is welcoming and helpful. It is vital that our families spend time with our students and communicate with them. Students will be placed with a family that match their needs.

We recognise at **St. George's School of English** that good English family accommodation is as important as a good course. Students spend quite a lot of time at an English home and therefore should feel comfortable, warm and welcome.

This leaflet informs both students and families what **St. George's School of English** expects of the accommodation arrangements.

#### **Host Family Monitoring System**

Every student evaluates the service received by the host family throughout their stay. Host families are rated based on this feedback which assesses: hospitality, cleanliness, friendliness, consideration, quality of food, etc. This is also the criteria that St George's takes into consideration when visiting and accepting host families as per the British Council procedure.

We also welcome host families comments and concerns regarding students. Both host families and students have full support from St George's team which can be contacted during our office hours and on our emergency number outside office hours.

#### **Nationalities of students in the home**

A **St. George's School of English** student should be the only student of his/her nationality or language group staying with the family; we encourage host families to take students of another nationality so they can practise their English and meet new friends.

#### **The Student's Bedroom**

Families with more than one bedroom accommodate students only in those bedrooms that have been agreed with **St. George's School of English**.

##### **The bedroom should include...**

- a firm comfortable bed of at least standard size
- a wardrobe and chest of drawers
- a mirror
- a chair, table and lamp suitable for study or facilities within the home for quiet study.

The room should be cleaned, dusted and vacuumed at least once a week and fresh bed linen and clean bath and hand towels provided every 2nd week. Students are expected to keep their room tidy and to make their bed every day.

#### **Heating**

English homes are not generally heated to as high a temperature as homes in other countries. Students may therefore take a little time to get accustomed to the lower temperature. Students however should have sufficient heating in their bedroom so as not to feel cold in the early morning and to be warm enough while doing their homework and at bedtime. (Heating is much more expensive in England than in most countries). Extra blankets should be available.

#### **Baths & Showers**

Baths are more usual in England than showers. Students should be allowed to take a bath (or shower) every day, if they wish to do so. As the bathroom is, in most cases, shared with other members of the household, students should check with the family which times are the most convenient to use the bathroom and they should clean the bath after use. Families should also ensure that the bathroom/shower/toilet is clean daily.

#### **Laundry**

Host families are expected to do students' laundry. Students should tell the family if they have any laundry.

#### **Door Keys**

If a student is over the age of 16 then a door key should be given to the student on their arrival and taken back on the day of their departure. If a student is under the age of 16, then it at the host family's discretion whether or not they issue a door key. However if they do not issue a door key, they should ensure that someone is at home to let them in at arranged and reasonable times.

#### **Meals**

Accommodation arrangements include breakfast, packed lunch and evening meal Monday to Friday and full board at the weekend. Students and family should eat together.

Students and host families should discuss likes and dislikes so as not to waste food. A substantial breakfast should be offered. As a minimum, it should include cereal, toast (or rolls), butter and jam, tea or coffee.

Food and cooking are different in every country – students must not expect to eat the same types of meal they have in their own home but can expect sufficient variety and quantity to satisfy their appetites.

Students will receive a packed lunch, which should contain as **a minimum** the following items:

- Two rounds of sandwiches with a reasonable filling. (Rolls or French baguette) – meat or cheese with salad.
- One piece of fruit
- One drink
- One biscuit/yoghurt

Host families ensure the packed lunch varies from day to day.

The evening meal should also be substantial – and most days include meat, fish or poultry and a dessert – because it is the student's main meal of the day. Weekend lunches vary from family to family, sometimes a light meal, other times a big meal. Unlike many continental countries, in England it is not usual to drink alcohol with meals at home. Students should not use the kitchen, or help yourself to food, unless your hostess has given permission.

If students do not intend to be home for a meal they must inform their family in the morning or preferably the day before. If students are out for the day at the weekend, they are entitled to a packed lunch, and should be offered this.

If students know they will be late for an evening meal, they may request a cold snack to be left for them.

### Telephone

International telephone calls are expensive. At **St. George's School of English** we provide phone cards to ring abroad. They can be used with normal home phones and there is no charge for the family's phone bill. Students should keep all phone calls under 15 minutes so that they do not monopolise the Family phone.

### Damage in the house

Should students cause damage in the house, **St. George's School of English** can accept no responsibility for such damage, accidental or otherwise. Families are advised to check whether their household insurance covers damage caused by guests. Students and host families should report any alleged damages to the host family organiser to assist with administering the correct procedure.

Many of our students have some sort of insurance before coming to this country so it would be worth checking with them directly. Should there any damage occur, which the host family feels that it is the student's responsibility, the host family should do the following:

- Discuss the matter immediately with the student.
- Report the matter to the school who will **act as an mediator only and will not take any responsibility for damages.**
- The school will contact the student and/or the leader who will be responsible for any compensation that may be claimed.

### Students and their health

If students have a medical or dental problem, they should ask their host family to make an appointment with their doctor or dentist. Some doctors and dentists cannot accept new patients. If so, the students' family should look in the Yellow Pages for other local doctors or dentists for the student. Doctors may charge a fee to see you; dentists always charge. Emergency dentistry is available under the NHS daily 5.30p.m.- 10.00p.m.. Please telephone (or ask your family to telephone) the school office if you are ill and unable to come to school.

### Family life

Students are being accepted into English homes in order to experience a little of the English way of life, to have the opportunity to practise the English language and to have a comfortable and friendly place to eat and sleep.

Students are guests in the family but also members of the family. Students should not expect special treatment and both family and students should be considerate towards each other. It is important too for students and families to realise that there may be differences in customs and habits, though we encourage students to accept English ways of doing things. However, as in all relationships there should be a 'give and take' from both sides.

Students should be welcome to spend time in the company of the family but must also appreciate that there will be occasions when the family want to be on their own or go out alone.

### Social Programme

Students and host families should discuss the details of their social programme daily and arrange dinner, lunch, etc according to the timetable of the social programme.

### If there is a problem

We hope that the family and the student can solve any problem directly. Sometimes this is not possible, in which case the student or the family can speak with the Accommodation Officer who will assist and support both the family and the student.