



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

**OFFICE HOURS:** Monday to Friday 08:00 – 16:00

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### **EMERGENCY NUMBER:**

**0044 (0)7930 274158**

Please note that outside of office hours, this number is for genuine (non medical )  
emergencies only. The hard working members of St George's Team would appreciate this!

If a medical emergency arises, please contact the emergency services before ourselves.

**Medication should NOT be given to the students by the host family.**

### **SAFETY**

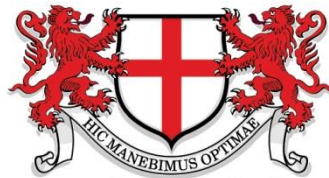
The Gas Safety Regulations 1994 state that it is your responsibility to ensure that all gas appliances are completely safe. This involves obtaining a Gas Safety Certificate through inspection by an installer who is on the Gas Safe Register ([www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)). Failure to do so may mean you are breaking the law. For further information call the Health and Safety Executive Gas Safety Advice Line (0800 300 363)

The St George's School of English

# GUIDE TO SURVIVING STUDENTS!

*for Host Families*

**2017**



**St. George's School of English**  
Providing greater opportunities in life

## The Host Family Guide to Surviving Students

This booklet has been written to ensure the best possible relationship between students and their host families. St Georges host families do not just do it for the financial benefit, but because it broadens their world knowledge and experience of different cultures and is often the start of lifelong friendships. Students choose this form of accommodation for home comforts, a family atmosphere, and a chance to practise their English and generally learn about the British way of life. They are not simply renting a room, but expect to be treated as one of the family.

### *Preparing to welcome your students*

For busy periods of the year there can sometimes be a short gap between students, and autopilot can take over when getting ready. To make the transition from one set of students to another less laborious it is best to buy at least two sets of bed linen per bed. Whilst one set is being used, the second one can be washed after being used for the last students. **We strongly recommend buying mattress protectors.** Every student should It may also help to keep things you use on a regular basis at hand (in the room if possible), i.e. bed linen, duster, bins. Adequate heating should be provided in the student room.

Students must also have access to a communal room (such as a living room), and washing facilities. He/she should be able to have a daily bath or shower – make sure the student understands how to use all of the facilities. It may be useful to work out a bathroom rota.

Cleaning the bathroom should always be on your list, as untidy and dirty bathrooms are the cause of many complaints and it would be a shame if such a simple thing spoils your experience of hosting.

We all have certain expectations of places we visit and staying in a welcoming, tidy and clean place definitely contributes to the overall enjoyment of our stay.



### ***Check for forgotten items and breakages***

In the chaos of the busy days it is easy to forget things, especially on their last morning. Passports, mobile phones, chargers, jackets get left behind regularly. Please check the student room on their last day to make sure they have not left anything behind. Many do and it takes lots of yours and our time to organise the safe return of the items. Spending a minute to check their room before they leave your house for the last time can save lots of time later. Please also take time to check your car before driving away after dropping your students off.

Please remember that the majority of our students have insurance to cover accidental breakages and spillages. However, in accordance with the insurance rules and regulations any accidental damage must be reported immediately and supported with photographic evidence before the group or a person leaves. We advise you to carry out sporadic checks in the room to spot any damage in time. If in doubt, contact us, as this might allow us to send a leader or/and one of us to inspect the damage.

### **IMPORTANT: WE WILL BE UNABLE TO CLAIM FOR DAMAGES AFTER THE DEPARTURE.**

St George's school of English act as mediators only, and insurance claim payments cannot be paid to the host families by the school before receiving the funds from the student/agency.

### ***Enjoy the experience of hosting students***

In the business of everyday life it's very easy to lose sight of what really matters. As a result, we can spend most of our time just tackling things as they shoot at us.

We at St. George's want to make your hosting experience as easy and enjoyable as possible every time, so that the reward for hosting students comes as much from sharing your home with them and making a difference in these young students' lives, as well as enjoying the extra cash you receive for doing such a great service. It is reminding ourselves of the bigger

picture that gives us a new perspective and makes us able to embrace the everyday craziness whilst providing us with satisfaction and enjoyment.



### ***Ask them to help!***

We appreciate that some basic tasks like cleaning the house or running errands can eat up a large amount of your time and leave less to enjoy your time with your family and guests. Don't be shy about asking your students to pitch in. Whilst it is not advisable to ask them to wash up, Hoover the house, or scrub the bathroom you can ask them to clear up the table when they finish their food, or tidy up their room.

### ***Ask us to help!***

Close liaison with the school avoids many problems. Most student stays are happy and uncomplicated, but from time to time problems may arise. We are experienced in dealing with many situations that you may not have come across before. A conscientious host will want to make sure that the students work and health are not suffering because of too many late nights. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you feel that the student is homesick, or suffering from illness or stress.

### ***Transfer of students to another household***

Occasionally matchings do not work, although the Accommodation Officer tries to arrange compatible hosts and guests and resolve any problems. There is variety of reasons that students request a transfer, and this should not be taken personally by the host family. It may well be in your interest to arrange a swift move should a transfer be necessary. The majority of issues arise from a lack of communication or a misunderstanding.

Please remember that technology today allows the students (especially the younger ones) to send quick brief messages back home if they feel unhappy or unsure about something with the host family or in the home. Often parents get concerned and occasionally will demand that the students are moved. Many of these issues could have been resolved with

better communication and understanding. The payment for that night will be made to the new host family.



### ***First impressions count!***

For many students this may be the first time away from home. Their backgrounds will vary and they may have very different ideas of home life. Students will make their first impressions the same way as any other visitors would, with their first step into your home. Host families who smile and pay attention to students on their first day make them feel like a welcomed and wanted guest usually receive the best feedback.

We understand that it is not always feasible to clean up the whole house before they arrive, however a quick tidy up goes a long way, especially clearing the floors of things out of place. Remember that students will respect your house if you show them that you respect it first.

\*We understand that occasionally a host family will require help from friends and family to collect the students. For the safety of the students we request to be notified in advanced. The person collecting on your behalf may be asked to provide identity and a copy of the booking.

### ***Communication is the key***

Communication is vital for creating and sustaining all relationships. We appreciate that sometimes the level of English of the student may not be at a desired level for the flow of conversation, but they are here to experience all aspects of British life, regardless of their language barrier. Use all forms of communication to fulfil your role as a host parent; remember that it is a two-way thing so please encourage your students to converse. Use opportunities at the dinner table to discuss their day, what they have seen, and what impressed them. Students love sharing their new found experiences and even if they don't have a great level of understanding they will still enjoy your attention.

Every family has their own routines and domestic arrangements and the students will be uncertain of these. To make the students feel at home, it is always helpful to explain the ground rules and to ensure that these are clear to the students early on.

Food wastage is common complaint from host families. It is advisable to talk to your students about what they like and dislike early in their stay. There is no point making a lunch or dinner when they are not going to eat it (and they will need to eat whilst here!).

Some students may not be accustomed to tidying their own clothes or making their own beds. You may have to explain that they must now do these jobs for themselves.

Sometimes students can misread the boundaries so it helps to clarify your rules and set their expectations. We have created a sample of house rules collated from host families with different experiences – please ask if you would like a copy emailed to you.

### ***Share your schedule***

It is good practice to communicate your and their schedule to them in advance and make sure they understand. They will understand you need to spend time working, or organising and running your household, but it is important to make time for them and their recreation – even if it is to offer a film to watch or to relax in the garden. Some students can be shy but there is always something you can do to make them feel ‘at home’ with you.

Every family has their own routines and domestic arrangements and the students will be uncertain of these. To make the students feel at home, it is always helpful to explain the ground rules and to ensure that these are clear to the students early on.

Getting students up in the morning can be a hard task sometimes as they tend to spend the nights discussing their experiences and enjoying their time together. It is always advisable to make sure you check their alarm (usually they use the mobile phone) to make sure it is set up for a desirable hour (English time). Make them understand that it is important to stick to the timings. They may feel that they are on holiday and we all allow ourselves a bit of ‘laziness’ when in holiday mode.

**It is important to let students know what time they are able to return home.** Many of our students will be on a social programme and you will be aware of their return time from their schedule. Junior students will have a curfew that needs to be adhered to. Keys should only be offered to students over 16 years.

The majority of host families will eat between 17:00-18:30. Please communicate dinner times to the students so that they are home in time.

### ***What's on the menu?***

One of the biggest differences to their homes students describe is the food. English cuisine can be a bit rich and a bit 'dry' for students. Some are more adventurous in tasting different cuisines than others so it is always best to start their stay with something simple and quick for preparation. We have created a sample menu with several suggestions, based on feedback students provided us with. We hope this helps.

It is sad how many packed lunches do end up in the bin. We strongly advise to discuss the likes and dislikes with your students before wasting good food and your efforts. Our sample menu gives some suggestions for packed lunch items too.



### **Menu Suggestions**

#### **Breakfast**

Cereals with milk, toast with jam or chocolate spread, glass of juice, squash or a warm drink  
Croissants or other pastries, glass of juice, squash or a warm drink  
Fruit loaf with butter and jam, glass of juice, squash or a warm drink  
Crumpets with butter, marmite or chocolate spread, glass or juice, squash or a warm drink  
Waffles or pancakes with jam or chocolate spread, glass or juice, squash or a warm drink

#### **Packed lunch (always include a minimum of 5 fresh in-date items)**

Bread rolls (2x) with **a generous filling**, piece of fruit, chocolate bar, pack of crisps, drink  
Sandwiches (4 slices = 2 rounds) with **a generous filling**, piece of fruit, muffin, popcorn, drink  
Cheese and onion pastry, piece of fruit, fruit tart, pack of crisps, drink  
Wraps with ham or tuna and salad, piece of fruit, chocolate bar, yoghurt, drink  
Baguette with cream cheese and vegetables or ham, piece of fruit, biscuits, cheese puffs or tortillas, drink



Filling suggestions:-

ham / cheese / tuna / cream cheese and salad / chicken / cheese and tomato

**Dinner (please always offer a pudding)**

Pasta bake, garlic bread, salad or cooked vegetables, squash or water, ice cream

Jacket potato with butter, beans and cheese, salad or cooked vegetables, squash or water, chocolate mousse

Pizza with chips and salad or cooked vegetables, squash or water, yoghurt

Spaghetti Bolognese, salad or cooked vegetables, squash or water, pie with custard

Chicken nuggets and rice, salad or cooked vegetables, squash or water, ice lollies

Stir fry with meat or vegetables, squash or water, a slice of cake

Risotto with meat or vegetables and cheese, squash or water, ice cream

Quiche, jacket potato, salad, squash or water, mousse

Lasagne, vegetables, squash or water, fruit salad with ice cream

Fish and chips, peas, squash or water, custard with biscuits

Steak pie, mashed potato, cooked vegetables, squash or water, a slice of pie

\*Special dietary requirements – if you are hosting a student with special dietary requirements and need advice, please contact the school.



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