



Host Family Accommodation - Student Guide

Introduction

Staying with a host family is an excellent way to quickly settle into life in the UK. You will be able to practice your English language skills and learn about British culture. By staying with a host family selected by Brockenhurst College you will be placed with a local family who will welcome you into their family life as well as their home. You will have the opportunity to get involved in everyday family life, from eating together to watching television. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to experience 'real life' in the UK and one that will differ greatly from the experience you would get if you came to the UK on holiday. The more you put into the experience, the more you will get from it.

Host families are carefully selected, inspected and regularly checked by the International Student Experience Team at Brockenhurst College. All homes comply with safety regulations, whilst the families themselves have all passed the Disclosure and Barring Service (police records) check. This ensures a safe and comfortable environment in which to live and study.

Moving away from home can be a daunting prospect. The following information will hopefully provide you with information to help you prepare for life with a host family arranged through Brockenhurst College.

What will my host family be like?

Many of our host families have years of experience of welcoming students into their homes. You may find that your host family has younger children, no children or even be a single person. It is common in the UK for families to have a pet. Also, some host families will have more than one student staying with them and this may be a student of a different nationality.

As part of the application process we ask you about any preferences you may have, this allows us to make the best possible match when choosing a host family for you.

Your host family has certain responsibilities to you. You can expect your host family to meet the following expectations:

- Provide you with a safe and welcoming environment to help you settle into life in the UK
- Support and make you feel like a part of the family, with the same privileges and obligations
- Help you contact family members, friends and other support networks
- Help you open a bank account, register with the police (if required), register with the local GP, learn how to use public transportation and help you get to know the local community.

Family life

Host family accommodation works well when there is an understanding between the provider and student and a willingness to be fair to each other. Your host family will welcome you into their home and family life, in return they may ask you to accept some family rules and routines. Your family will discuss these with you when you arrive – this will help avoid any misunderstandings and should make you feel more comfortable. Below are some general guidelines about UK family life:

- Your host may give you a time to arrive home on College nights. Please follow this – they are only concerned for your safety and attention at College;
- Please tell your host family in advance if you are going to be home late or if you are planning to stay away overnight;
- If you do come in late, or are still up after your hosts have gone to bed, please be considerate about making noise, especially if your hosts have children or have an early start;
- It is likely that host families will not allow smoking in the house. If you want to smoke, you will need to speak to your host family to arrange where it is appropriate to do so;
- Your host family may not want you to use the house telephone to make telephone calls. They will however give you advice on how to get a UK mobile or SIM card. You will have access to the internet, so will be able to use Skype to contact friends and family;
- You will be expected to keep your

bedroom tidy, however, your host family will clean it for you.

Food

Your host family will provide your breakfast and dinner during the week (Monday to Friday), and at weekends, College holidays and on bank holidays they will also provide you with lunch. Your host family will already know if you are a vegetarian, or do not eat certain types of food, providing you have included that information on your application form.

Meal times are an important time for socialising and practicing your English language skills; your host family will let you know the times of family meals so that you can join them. If you are going to miss a meal please let your host family know. Or if you are going to be in late, but still want dinner, they will save your dinner for you to have later.

During the week you are responsible for your own lunches. At the College there is the Hard Brock Café where you can buy food, snacks and drinks. Also, there are supermarkets in local towns and villages and many may have a 'world food' section. Your host family may choose to let you know any specific times that is best for you to use the kitchen. Your host family will give you a small part of a kitchen cupboard and the fridge so you can store your own food.

It is often customary in the UK to have a cold or smaller meal at lunchtime, rather than a large cooked meal; often this will be sandwiches, perhaps soup or a salad. Sometimes your host family might prepare toasted meals at lunchtime (cheese on toast, baked beans on toast) or a baked potato with a variety of fillings. This might be different to what you are accustomed to in your country, so please talk to your host about your likes & dislikes and they will try to accommodate your requirements.

Your bedroom

You will have your own bedroom, which, in addition to having an adequately sized bed, will have a desk, a chair, hanging



and drawer space, a bedside table, shelving, be carpeted (or have a rug) and a waste paper basket. Your host family will provide you with all bed linen; if you require any extra blankets, they will be happy to provide them. All host accommodation has been inspected, and bedrooms comply with the British Council's (2013/14) guidelines, they will be in a good state of cleanliness and repair, allow for privacy, natural light and be adequately heated. In your room you will have unlimited access to the internet. You will be expected to keep your room tidy, but it will be cleaned by your host family.

The bathroom

You will be able to take a daily bath or shower. In some of our host family accommodation you may have to share a bathroom with some family members or other students. If you do share a bathroom your host may try to come to an agreement about timings.

Keys

You will be given a set of keys to your host family accommodation. If all of your host family are out when you leave the property, it is your job to securely lock the house. Keys must be returned at the end of your stay, and it is very important, for security reasons, that you look after the keys.

Laundry

Bed linen will be washed and changed every week. Your host family will also do your personal laundry and ironing once or twice a week. You will however be responsible for cleaning items that require special care or dry cleaning.

Travel

You will travel to the College by bus or train just like our local students do. All host accommodation is located within 30 minutes' walk or travel time on public transport to the College. Your host family will help you understand the best route into the College.

At the beginning of the year there is a Meet and Greet service from London Heathrow Airport to Brockenhurst College that you can use. Your host family

will then pick you up from the College. If however, you decide not to use the Meet and Greet service you will be responsible for getting to your host accommodation from the airport. However, your host family will still pick you up from the local bus or railway station.

Friends

Friends may visit you at your host family accommodation for a cup of coffee or to study. However, it is always advisable that you discuss this subject with your host at the beginning of your stay. You should always ask your host family's permission first, and respect their wishes.

Holidays

Of course you may wish to go home over the Christmas and Easter vacations. Your accommodation fee includes all relevant public & College holidays. You cannot be exempted from this fee as you are still occupying the bedroom even if you are back home.

If you do not go home over these holiday periods, your host family will include you in any family plans. Host accommodation will be provided as usual over the half-term College breaks.

If you are under the age of 18, you will not be left alone overnight. Meals will still be provided for you as usual.

Illness or injury

Your host family will help you register with a doctor when you first arrive. They will also help you if you have any medical problems throughout your stay.

Of course, it is important that you attend all lectures. Your host family may ask for a copy of your timetable, this is simply because if you are ill it is the responsibility of your host family to contact the College's attendance/absence hotline. The attendance hotline is 01590 625530.

Breakages and Damages

We ask you to respect your host family's home and follow any rules. However, accidents can happen. Should they occur, please let your host family know immediately. In some cases you may be required to pay for a replacement.

What happens if the relationship between me and my host family is not working?

Misunderstandings can occur between you and your host family. If you are unsure about an aspect of your host family life, or are unclear of what is expected of you, then please talk to your hosts directly. Usually, a problem can be solved quickly and easily through open communication. You are also welcome to come to the International Department at the College any time to discuss any issues. Alternatively, you can email us – international@brock.ac.uk. We can help you with any issue, big or small and are always happy to help. Very rarely do we need to arrange other host family accommodation; however, if this is the case, we are happy to help.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Brockenhurst College **01590 625555**

Brockenhurst College International Team
01590 625325

International Email Address
international@brock.ac.uk

Emergency Contact Number
07970 069822

Attendance Hotline **01590 625530**

College Designated Officer:
Samantha Ettle - International Student Experience Officer.
email: settle@brock.ac.uk

Data Protection

Student data is held on computer during your time at Brockenhurst College. After you have joined us, the College may occasionally make your information available to relevant outside agencies.

By agreeing to study at Brockenhurst College, you agree that your personal information can be processed and used in this way, after enrolment. You may find out more and discuss limiting the way your personal information is to be used by contacting the College. Brockenhurst College is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998. You may see a full copy of the Data Protection Policy on request