

# HINTS FOR HOSTING STUDENTS FOR WORCESTER SCHOOL

This information is to supplement that given in the Code of Practice.

## SHARING YOUR HOME WITH A STUDENT

Living with a British family is an essential part of the language course as it gives students the opportunity to practice their English in an informal, friendly atmosphere.

## THE STUDENTS

..... attend our courses as individuals, or are sponsored by their companies. They are here for serious study purposes, learning English for business, social reasons or examinations. The length of stay varies from 1 - 12 weeks but 3 - 4 weeks is typical. Our minimum age is 25 & there is no maximum age; most students are in their 40s.

## THE COURSE

We have various types of courses but most students are on a full-time intensive course. This means they are in lessons or occupied from **09:30 - 15:00** every week - day as a minimum. Our study facilities are open **from 08:00 - 18:00** Mon - Fri and are available to all registered students.

## LANGUAGE PROBLEMS

Please be tolerant of language problems. Sometimes a student may sound rather rude or abrupt because they haven't mastered the polite forms of English. Don't take offence but do try to correct any glaring misuse of the language.



It is against our Code of Practice for host families to host students of the same native language at the same time unless by special arrangement with both the students and Worcester School. In the event that this happens we may request that the student is moved to another homestay with the consent of the student.

## MANNERS

We feel that it is important to give students guidance on acceptable behaviour, bearing in mind that some cultures are very different from our own. Please try to do this tactfully!

## BEDROOMS & BATHROOMS

Please talk to your student/s about cleaning their room and bathroom facilities especially if it's a private bathroom. They should make their own bed and keep it tidy but they're not expected to clean it, especially if they are staying with you for more than a week or so. If they choose to clean it themselves that's fine but please ask! Their bed linen and towels should also be changed and cleaned at least once a week.

Most students expect to have a shower or bath every day. It is a good idea to agree on the best time to do this so that the running of your household is not disrupted.

## FOOD

Many students arrive expecting the worst regarding English food! Fortunately, thanks to our homestays, most of them leave with a very different opinion. Experience has taught us that students appreciate the following points:

- Being asked on day 1 if they have any particular likes/dislikes.
- **Being offered a varied breakfast. Maybe offer fruit & yogurt as well as cereals & toast etc. Maybe a cooked breakfast at the weekend.**
- Being offered the chance to try "new" food & being allowed to dislike it!
- **Being offered tea/biscuits (or similar) when they get in from school (especially if dinner time is a long way off!)**
- Bread and water on the dinner table.
- **Good quality home-cooking NOT microwave fast food.**
- Low-fat alternatives to puddings where possible (eg fruit or yoghurt).
- **Leisurely dinner-time with plenty of conversation at a dining table, not on a tray in front of the TV.**
- Having "house-rules" made clear eg can they help themselves to tea/coffee or should they ask or should they wait to be asked?

Why not invite your guest to come to the supermarket with you? It may seem mundane to you but it could be an interesting experience for them.

## KEYS

Students need easy access to the house so please give them a door key. If you have more than one student staying it would be appreciated if you could supply a key for each student. At the same time make it crystal clear if you have any special security procedures that they must follow & whether or not they should turn the lights off if they arrive back late at night etc.



## LAUNDRY

If you are happy to do a little extra with the family wash then this is always appreciated. Otherwise please make it clear how the student should do their own laundry, directing them to the launderette if necessary.



## INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that you have suitable household insurance that covers any paying guests that you have to stay as Worcester School **is not** liable for any breakages or damage caused by the student.

Gibbs Denley specialise in insurance for homestays. You may want to call them for a quote:

Gibbs Denley, Crystal House, Buckingham Park, Swavesey, Cambridge, CB24 4UL.

Tel: 01954 233650

Fax: 01954 231708

Web: [www.course-u-can.com](http://www.course-u-can.com)

## GAS SAFETY CERTIFICATE

Under the Gas Safety Regulations, all homestays with gas appliances and/or boilers should have a Gas Safety Certificate. All gas engineer must be on the **GAS SAFE REGISTER**. The CORGI register will no longer count for those purposes. This costs from about £50 per year and if nothing else, gives you peace of mind. You are responsible for the students' wellbeing while they stay with you. We will require a copy of the certificate.

## TELEPHONE

Students should always ask if they wish to use the phone. Tesco Express sells international phone cards and these cards can be used from any phone. It is important that incoming calls are allowed as their family may need to get in touch.



Most students have mobile phones now and they can buy a UK SIM card to give them cheap calls abroad so the above is less of a problem than before.

## INTERNET ACCESS

If you have Wi-Fi internet access and are happy for the student to use it please talk to them about any limits – for example only for email if you have a data limit each month. We have unlimited high-speed Wi-Fi at school which they can use during the day.

It is a requirement that all executive category families have wireless internet access however it has now become the norm for other category homestays to provide it too.

## SOCIAL EVENTS

Although we do not organize any social activities at Worcester School of English, it is very likely that students will want to arrange to meet up with others in the evenings. We will always be happy to help them by recommending places to go in the evenings and at weekends. It would be appreciated if you could help out by supporting your student in any way you can to help them have an enjoyable social side to their stay.

## THE KEY TO SUCCESS

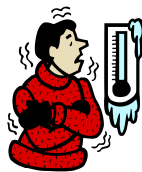
We know from experience that there is one thing above all others which students appreciate and which leads them to sing their host families praises. It's very simple and it costs nothing - friendly conversation. If you are prepared to talk to and listen to your student, particularly over dinner in the evenings, then you're on to the winning formula. If you provide material comfort but no friendly chit-chat you will have an unhappy guest in your home.

## STUDENTS' OBLIGATIONS

You can expect your student to keep their own room tidy, make their own bed and help clear up after meals.

They should be punctual at mealtimes and let you know in advance if they will not be home for a meal. To make this easier please make sure they know what time you plan to eat. They may sometimes need to be ready by a certain time if they have arranged to meet fellow students in town in the evening.

## OTHER HINTS



Some students find England **bitterly cold**, particularly in the winter & particularly at night. (If the student comes from a hot country they may have little concept of the cost of heating and are surprised that it is switched off at night!). It is a good idea to offer extra blankets/a hot-water bottle or even a warm dressing-gown & slippers!

We **meet & greet** all students and visitors at our **Foregate Street front entrance**, so if you come to the school or bring your student to the school at any time, please use this entrance as the back is locked for security reasons.

**Television** is a good learning opportunity, especially if there's a British person on hand to help with explanations. Watching in silence can be a lonely, boring &/or mystifying experience.



If a student spends a lot of time in their room, this could be because they need help overcoming the initial awkwardness of being in a strange house. **Do encourage them to integrate with you** but obviously allow them to be alone if they insist.

We once received an unusual complaint. A student's offer to help with the **washing-up** had been declined every evening! They had wanted to get involved with family life and have a chat along the way, not be treated like a hotel guest.



Some homestays have let their students loose in the kitchen for an evening and been rewarded with a wonderful meal from overseas. **Why not see if yours would like the opportunity to cook for you?**

If you have any special house rules then it's best to make them clear right at the beginning of the stay.

## AND LASTLY .....

If you have problems that can't initially be sorted out between yourself & the student then contact me and hopefully we can help find an early solution. Phone me on 01905-619877 or email me: [sue@worchester-school.com](mailto:sue@worchester-school.com)

In an **emergency**, the school telephone number 01905-619877 is only available during office hours. Outside office hours please call my mobile 07989-863276 but please don't ring this number unless it is an emergency.

Thanks.

*Sue Johns*

**Sue Johns**  
**Director & Accommodation / Welfare Manager**  
**Worcester School of English**