

## Homestay Fact Sheet

*“The art of life is a constant readjustment to our surroundings.”*

*“Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore.”*

*Staying with a British host is all part of your experience and as important as the course at the school. Please do not expect the customs and facilities to be the same as you might have back in your country. As part of your homestay experience, you will be expected to fit in with British customs and culture. There may be some elements of life that are not familiar to you but this is all part of the experience!*

### Frequently asked questions

### Answers

What type of house might I stay in?

Typical houses in the UK are usually quite small and most have 2 to 4 bedrooms. There are new houses, houses built in the 1930s ,1960s and 1970s. The UK is the most densely populated country in Europe and that is why we live in relatively small spaces. Many houses are very old and were built in the 19th century. You could be staying in a house just like in the pictures below.



Who will be my hosts?

Homestay hosts are all very different. They might be single people, families with children, retired couples or single mothers with children. Our hosts reflect the modern society and culture in the UK.

How far is the host from the school and will I have to walk?

Most of our hosts live between a 5 to 25 minute walk from the school. It is expected that you will walk to school. On some occasions the host is more than a 25 minute walk and you will be provided with a bus pass.

What will I eat?

During your stay your host will provide breakfast and an evening meal and in some cases a packed lunch might be provided. Breakfast in the UK typically consists of cereal, coffee or tea and toast. You might be offered fruit and yoghurt. Dinner time in the UK varies with most people eating between 5.00pm and 7.00pm. The food you are given will depend on the host. The food we cook in the UK is varied and international and could be anything from pasta, rice to savoury pies. Sausages are a favourite and many people will eat pizza or curry at least once a week. The famous roast dinner and English breakfast are usually eaten on the weekend. Most meals are prepared with vegetables or salad.

Questions	Answers
Does the host have pets?	The British love animals and many homes will have a cat or a dog or both. The household pet is often as much part of the family as the humans! Getting to know the family dog or cat is a great way to “break the ice” with the host! Don’t worry, the pets are usually kept out of the bedrooms. If you are genuinely allergic to cats or dogs, please let us know and we will make sure you stay with a host who doesn’t have pets.
Will the host speak with me?	Yes. We expect all of our hosts to speak with their students. However, conversation is a two-way engagement involving more than one person. We provide a host questionnaire in the student booklet that will be given to you before you arrive. Please read it and use it to help you converse with the host on the first evening.
What are my responsibilities in the house?	<p>We expect our hosts to respect our students and we also expect our students to respect our hosts. The host is not expected to tidy your room for you so please keep it tidy – do not leave rubbish on the floor and tidy your clothes and make your bed before leaving every day.</p> <p>Although most hosts will not expect students to help them with the cooking, it is polite to offer to help lay the table and clear the plates. Most hosts have dish washers and we suggest you offer to help load the dish washer or wash the dishes after a meal. Never walk away from the table after a meal and leave your plates on the table. This is considered very rude in the UK.</p>
Do I need to be aware of any rules?	<p>Most hosts will have daily routines and you should try to “fit in”. The rules of the house will vary depending on the host . Some hosts might have specific rules regarding household facilities such as how to use the shower properly, turning off electrical appliances at night or how to shut the front door when you leave.</p> <p>The hosts will be given your timetable before you arrive and will know when you are to be expected back home. Please make sure you are home at the correct time according to your timetable. The host will be worried if you aren’t.</p>
Can I take photos in the house?	It is prohibited to take any photos inside the house without the hosts approval. You must ask your host first if it is okay to take photos inside the house. Photos shared via WhatsApp, Facebook , Instagram, snapchat or any other social media are strictly prohibited without the hosts consent.
How clean will the house be?	Our hosts are all inspected by our accommodation officer and we expect our students to be accommodated in a clean house. However, we are also aware that what we consider clean in the UK might not be considered clean in other parts of the world. You must be aware of this before you arrive.

## The Mobile phone!

Over the years the use/misuse of the mobile has been at the forefront of many meetings and debates. This is why we have dedicated a page on how this effects the students' experience with the host. We have given a clear and honest list of advantages and disadvantages below.

### Advantages of the mobile phone

- ✓ The mobile phone is a great resource for studying – online dictionaries and grammar and vocabulary advice are all readily available and can be accessed within minute.
- ✓ The mobile phone is a perfect tool for finding out information such as facts about the local area. Good for any home study!
- ✓ With the hosts consent, you can take photos and store them in your phone to record your experience.

### Disadvantages of the mobile phone

- ✓ A simple fact is that your mobile phone will stop you from speaking and practising your English. Many of us are addicted to our phones and to social media. Have a week off! Give your phone a rest!
- ✓ You are here to experience life in the UK and staying with a host is part of that experience. On the phone every day to family and friends back in your country is not giving you the opportunity to fully experience your trip or your time at the hosts. Try to limit your contact to just one call to let your family know you have arrived safely. If you have any worries about your host, speak to your leader and not your family.
- ✓ Mobile games are a distraction. They take up too much time and stop you from engaging in life and conversation. Switch off or delete the gaming App before you arrive.