

THE BOURNEMOUTH AND POOLE COLLEGE

# HOMESTAY ACCOMMODATION GUIDE



*" A great place for living  
- a great place for learning "*

Life in England may be very different from what you are used to. Our way of life, food and habits will be different. Our role is to help you settle in and make your stay as enjoyable as possible. Misunderstandings may occur if you are not sure what to do – ask your homestay family if you are not clear about something, they will be pleased to explain fully. We expect our families to provide you with good accommodation, good food, to be friendly and helpful and to make you feel at home. We hope they will treat you as one of the family and you must also treat them with consideration.

We believe that students who are new to the UK benefit greatly from staying with a family. It encourages you to speak and develop your English Language skills and helps you settle into the British way of life.

Homestay (family) accommodation gives you the opportunity to become a member of an English family and provides you with the family support. This means following the family rules, which may include, setting a time they would like you to be home in the evening, being prompt for meals, no smoking in the house, etc.

Homestay includes breakfast and an evening meal during the week, lunch is only included at the weekends and possibly during holiday times depending on arrangements with your family. At The College there are various cafeterias and coffee shops to buy lunch, drinks and snacks during the week. If you like to eat large quantities of fruit or chocolate biscuits, you are expected to buy these extra snacks yourself.



Family accommodation can vary enormously. It may be with one single person, i.e. the house owner, it may be a family of husband, wife and children. It may include pets and some homes only take non-smokers. We will endeavour to match you to a family that suits your needs and preferences. As each family is different, you will need to learn the family routine in order to be happy there.

You will be treated, as far as possible, as a member of the family, so it is important that you try and contribute as other family members do, i.e. if members of the family take it in turn to wash up, it is a nice idea to volunteer to help also. Please ask about use of equipment - do not risk breaking items due to a lack of knowledge.

If you have any doubts or difficulties about your role in the family, talk to your tutor, or please come and see us in the International Office.

If you are still not satisfied, contact OFSTED on **08456 404040** or e-mail: **enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk**

The College takes responsibility for arranging accommodation for students when they first arrive. We can, however, only offer homestay accommodation, which involves living with a local family. Homestay accommodation simply means staying in someone's house. This could be a 'nuclear' family of two parents and children but very likely, it will not be. A wide variety of people offer student accommodation in their homes. The UK is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society and both Bournemouth and Poole reflect this.

Our homestay accommodation is carefully selected and students will almost always be offered their own single room. Where two students request to stay with the same family they could be offered a twin room to share if this is available. Students will be provided with breakfast and dinner Monday to Friday and breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday and Sunday. Host families normally charge for laundry or may provide laundry facilities, this is by private arrangement. In most homes you will not be allowed to make outgoing telephone calls. You should be allowed to have incoming calls but please make sure you only receive calls at a reasonable time in the mornings and evenings.



From the student's point of view, Homestay Accommodation offers the best value for money. It is not perfect and as a 'paying guest' you will have to adjust to the family's timetable, not the other way around. If you like to stay out late and stay in bed in the morning then this type of accommodation is not suitable for you. If you want extra food and drinks, you must pay for them.

The people who offer accommodation in their homes would not do it for free, but wherever you come from, **Please think in UK terms - the cheapest 'hotels' offering Bed & Breakfast in this area charge more than £30 per night.**

The big question for all students before coming to the UK, is, can you afford to pay all your bills on a regular basis? **Do not rely on getting a job to pay all your bills - as a Student your priority is to study not work.**

Once we have matched a family to your preferences and arranged the booking, you will pay the family directly and immediately upon arrival.



## Room Furnishings

You can expect a furnished room to include:

- Single/ double bed
- Adequate storage space, i.e. wardrobe, chest of drawers
- Table/ desk and chair (or suitable study area in the house – i.e. dining table)
- Adequate heating i.e. radiator
- Adequate lighting i.e. good room light, and side lamp
- Adequate soft furnishings, e.g. carpets, curtains, lampshade, bed linen etc.

Accommodation will have an acceptable standard of décor, cleanliness and maintenance.

## Access to your room & your homestay

Your family will need access to your room to change the bed linen and they will usually make you aware of a regular time when they will do this. You will be expected to keep your room clean and tidy, though your family may wish to give your room a thorough clean from time to time. Take care of your house keys and remember to return them at the end of your stay.

## Baths/Showers

You can expect to have a daily bath or shower, although not all English homes have shower facilities. You must provide your own personal toiletries, e.g. shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant etc. Please do not leave hot taps running. You will also need to be careful that baths and showers do not overflow and cause damage.

## Personal Hygiene

It is the normal British custom to flush the toilet after use, but this may change as we become more ecologically aware! For disposal of sanitary towels, it is best to wrap them in paper or in a disposal bag, and place them in a dustbin or special receptacle. If you are in a homestay, please check with your family what you should do.

Your own personal freshness is most important as you will be in close proximity to others. However, consider others who need to use the bathroom facilities by not spending long periods of time there if your homestay family members have to get to work or school. Please ensure that baths and showers are left clean out of courtesy to other people who wish to use it after you.

## Mealtimes

You will be expected to be punctual at mealtimes so please tell your family if you are not going back for dinner. Tell them the night before or in the morning before you go to College.

If you do not like a particular food, please let your family know; they will not be offended. Please always ask your homestay family if you can bring a guest home.

## Laundry

Some families may do your laundry for you or allow you to do your own laundry in their home. This will generally be done once a week. Some families may ask you to use the launderette instead and you should ask where the nearest one is and what to do if you are unsure. Some launderettes have what is called a service wash where for a fee (£6-8) will take in your washing and then you can collect it later washed and dried.

## Electricity/Water/Gas

All electricity, water and gas charges are included in the price. If you wish to use a laptop, TV, stereo or other equipment not provided by the family, please check if this is OK with them first.

If you wish to study after 11pm at night, please check with your family that it won't disturb them to have the lights on. We would recommend that you make the best use of the day to study and get a good night's sleep – otherwise your studies are likely to suffer.

## Telephone

Use of the telephone is not included in the price and it is up to the family whether or not they let you use their telephone for outgoing calls, and at what cost. You should be able to receive incoming calls at a reasonable time of the day. Please discuss the use of the telephone with your family.

## Mobile Phone Debt

If you register your mobile phone under your homestay address, you must tell your host family you are doing this and make sure all your bills are paid before you leave. Please treat this as a serious issue.



## Excursions

Please tell your family in advance if you are going away for a day or more. Tell them what time you expect to return, or if you are not going home that night. If you do not intend going home, it would be helpful to give your host family a contact number in case of an emergency.

## Change of Address

Please come and see the Accommodation Officer in the International Office if you are considering, or intending to move out of your host family. It is College regulation and a condition of your enrolment that if you move, you inform the International Office, by completing a Change of Accommodation Form. This is the only way that we can be sure to contact you quickly in an emergency and guarantee the safe arrival of your post/certificates etc.

The College is here to help you, please come and see the Accommodation Officer first if you want to move from your homestay family, or if you have any accommodation problems.



## Home Alone

We are aware that on some occasions students may be allowed to stay alone in the house. If this happens you will need to contact us for support and we have to remind you that whilst you have the family's permission to be there, you must not have parties or take friends back to the house while the family are away.

## Doctor/Dentist

We strongly recommend that you register with a GP (Doctor) as soon as you arrive. Your host family will help you to register with their doctor, or please come to the International Office where we hold a list of doctors in the Bournemouth area. If you need to see a dentist, please come and see us in the International Office.



The British Council Award for International Student Support recognises best practice in supporting international students from recruitment through to completion of qualifications. It is granted to a college which has developed and maintained consistent and caring procedures in the support of international students studying in the UK.

## Payment

The payment interval is important. You need to remember that whatever the agreed payment interval (i.e. every 1, 2, 3 or 4 weeks) this becomes the period of notice, in law, which you would need to give to the family in the event of leaving. Failure to do this appropriately could lead to the loss of your deposit.

## Insurance

We feel this is essential for all students and strongly advise you to ask us for details. For a relatively small amount of money you could be covered for your possessions, personal effects and valuables against loss, damage or theft. You may also be covered for medical bills and personal injury following an accident. We have leaflets available and would be pleased to give you information.

## Please Understand

Homestay accommodation does have limitations and students have to realise they are living in someone else's home. It can only work if there is understanding from both provider and student and a willingness to be fair to each other.

Many students prefer to find their own accommodation in a flat or apartment. Whilst the cost for this independence is usually more than is paid to host families, it is best to choose accommodation that suits your lifestyle.

## Students Under 18 Years of Age

By law people under 18 are 'children'. All under 18's must stay in College approved accommodation unless parents/guardians give written permission for students to stay where they choose.

## Important

Always carry your host family's name, address and telephone number with you. Bournemouth is quite a safe place, but you should not walk alone at night. It would be better to get a taxi if you have to travel alone. Do not carry your passport and lots of money on you. Be careful with your camera and personal possessions, especially your mobile phone.

Do not take a lift from a stranger or hitchhike.

The College is here to help you, please come and see the Accommodation Officer first if you want to move from your homestay family, or if you have any accommodation problems.

We hope you will find your stay here a rewarding one and I look forward to meeting you during your stay at The College.

Accommodation & Administration Officer,  
Room 553, Lansdowne site  
Tel: **01202 205317**.  
Email: **baenar@bpc.ac.uk** or  
**demchenkoe@bpc.ac.uk**





Thank you to Bournemouth Tourism, Poole Tourism and Dorset County Council for the use of their photographs.

## International Operations

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