



Brockenhurst College



BEACON AWARD
COMMENDED 2018/19

Handbook for Homestay Students

Everything you need to know about living in Homestay accommodation while studying at Brockenhurst College



Welcome to Brock Homestay



Homestay at Brockenhurst College is arranged and managed by the International Team. We would like to extend a warm welcome to all our Homestay students and we hope you achieve all that you hope for when studying with us.

Brock is in the middle of the famous New Forest National Park and provides a unique learning environment for its students. Importantly, you will be fully-integrated into college life and will have the chance to make friends from all over the globe.

The aim of our Homestay provision is to give you a genuine 'home-from-home' experience. This gives you the perfect opportunity to improve your English and to learn about UK culture in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

The following information has been produced to give you all the information you will need to make a positive and smooth transition from home to Homestay accommodation. For further Homestay advice and information, you can direct your questions to the International Team and our dedicated International Student Experience Officer.

We very much look forward to welcoming you to Brockenhurst College and our extensive network of Homestay accommodation.

Paul Spanner
International Manager

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About Homestay accommodation

Homestay accommodation is all about immersing you into the life and culture of the UK, allowing you to quickly adapt to life here – no matter where you are from.

If you are coming from overseas, it gives you the chance to rapidly improve your English language skills and overcome any fears you may have about moving to a new country. Your Homestay provider will be there to help you with advice and guidance as well as moral support. If you are joining the Homestay programme from the UK, your Homestay will provide you with a smooth and successful transition to life in this part of the country.

Your Homestay host will be able to provide you with useful information about the local area and suggest the best places to visit. They will also be in regular contact with the College to ensure your stay is as enjoyable as possible.

At Brock we operate a zonal accommodation programme with Zones A to D. Zone A accommodation is limited and typically within walking distance of the College. Other zones require a journey

to College using the good transport links provided by train and college buses.

Brock follows the guidelines of the British Council, which advises that no more than four students should be placed in the same Homestay accommodation at one time. Importantly, all students will have their own bedroom.

While we endeavour to place students of different nationalities in Homestay accommodation, this is not always possible.

Homestay inspections

The International Team conducts an annual inspection of all Homestay accommodation, which ensures standards of accommodation are maintained and all regulatory requirements are met.

Help with accommodation

All Homestay accommodation is managed by the International Team who are here to help you. From your initial enquiry through to your graduation from college, they will be on-hand to give you continuous support. The International Team is based on the main campus in M Block, room M12. Office hours are 9:30am to 4:00pm, Monday to Friday. There is also a 24 hour emergency

line available for your convenience and safety. The emergency line is operated by members of the International Team, so you can be sure there is someone who can help you on the end of the line. Useful contacts, including the emergency number, are listed at the end of this guide.

Before your arrival

As soon as your place at the College is confirmed, we will begin the process of allocating your Homestay. You will have discussed your preferences and any particular requirements at interview and our pre-arrival documents will invite you to express your preference of zone for accommodation. Before your arrival, we will send you your host's profile. This will give you some background information about members of the household and their interests. It will also give you their contact details, and we strongly encourage you to contact your host before arrival. It will be a great chance to introduce yourself and to confirm your travel plans. Please note, you are not able to select a specific host or Homestay accommodation.

If you are using one of our complementary airport pickup services, or we have arranged a taxi transfer for you, we will inform your host of the details.

Meals in Homestay

All our Homestay accommodation is offered with half-board. This means that you can enjoy living in a home with breakfast and an evening meal provided by your host, seven days a week. You will also benefit from light lunches at weekends and holidays (apart from the summer holidays). From Monday to Friday during term time, lunch and snacks are your responsibility. You will find various outlets, including the Hard Brock Café on campus, where you can buy lunches and snacks. You will also be permitted to have a small storage area within your Homestay where you can store snacks. You are not permitted to store or cook food in your bedroom.

You are also not permitted to cook your own food in your Homestay accommodation, unless prior approval has been given by your host. You may, however, use the toaster and kettle as well as the microwave, if available, to heat any food you have purchased yourself. In any case of doubt, please speak with your host and/or the International Team.

You should not help yourself to the contents of the fridge, cupboards or drawers that you have not purchased unless you have first been given permission by your host.

You should expect to eat foods that the host would normally eat. However, there is no requirement for a host to provide you with food reflecting your country's traditional cuisine. This is a great opportunity to familiarise yourself with local foods and culture.

We encourage you to spend mealtimes with your host because this is a good way to develop your communication skills and integrate into family life. It is a time to share news and find out more about each other in an informal way.

If you adhere to a special diet, you will need to discuss this with us in advance (your interview is the perfect time to let us know). A supplementary charge of £25 per week will be made if you require a special diet (e.g. gluten free).

Laundry/cleaning

Your host will do your washing up to twice a week. However, they will not be responsible for ironing your clothes. Your host will communicate with you regarding the arrangements, such as days and times when washing will be done. Your host will also clean, but not tidy, your bedroom. You will be expected to keep your bedroom in a reasonable state and for it to be tidy enough to for your host to clean and change bedding when required.



Your bedroom

You will have your own private bedroom with a bed, hanging and drawer space for clothes, a study desk/table and chair and a bedside lamp. Your room will have adequate heating and extra blankets may be supplied upon request. If you wish to put a television or computer in your room, please talk with your host first. Your host will respect your privacy but will need access to your bedroom to be able to clean and change bedding regularly.

Internet access

Internet access is guaranteed with every Homestay provider and is included in your accommodation fees. If you are using the internet to make calls (video calls or otherwise), you should do so at reasonable times of the day.

Bed linen

Bed linen is provided by your host and they will be responsible for laundering it regularly.

Bathrooms

In most cases you will be sharing a family bathroom with the other members of the household. Please remember that others will also want to use the bathroom and hot water, and that certain times of day (e.g. early morning) are likely to be busy times. You should therefore be considerate of the needs of others. You will also be expected to clean the bath, shower, washbasin and toilet after use. When taking a shower, please do so at a reasonable hour and for a reasonable duration. If in any doubt, please speak with your host.

Heating

All of our Homestay accommodation is equipped with suitable heating. However, please be aware that it is quite common during the winter months for the heating to be on only in the early morning and evening. It is normal that the heating is

off during the day and during the night. If you feel cold, please ask your host for extra blankets to keep you warm at night. We understand that it can be difficult adapting to a new climate, so please communicate with your host and the International Team as necessary.

House key

Your host will provide you with a door key upon your arrival. Please endeavour to keep the key safe at all times. If you should lose your key, please inform your host immediately. If house locks are required to be changed following your loss of a key, you will be expected to cover the cost.

Your host will explain how to lock the front door to the accommodation. It is your responsibility, if you are the last to leave the house, to make sure the door is correctly shut and locked to ensure the property is secure.

On your final departure from your Homestay accommodation you should return the house key to your host.

Visitors

You should always seek your host's permission if you wish to bring any friends to visit you at your Homestay. The number of visitors at any one time should be kept to a reasonable level (e.g. 2-3 people).

You may wish occasionally to ask your host's permission to have a College friend stay overnight. It is at your host's discretion as to whether they will allow this, though you should also refer to 'Your whereabouts and curfews' for further information. Students must never share a bedroom overnight.

Telephone

If you have not yet acquired a UK mobile phone/SIM card, when you first arrive at your Homestay you may ask your host for permission to make a short phone call home to inform your parent/guardian of your safe

arrival. In all other cases, you should only use the host's landline for incoming calls, unless there is an emergency. Please ensure any incoming calls are at a reasonable hour and that they do not last too long. Again, you should request your host's permission in advance. Any phone bills you incur must be settled with your host in a timely manner.

Mobile phones

For your safety it is important to make sure you have a mobile phone suitable for use in the UK and keep it with you at all times. You should also ensure you have enough credit to make outgoing calls. You must give your mobile phone number to your host family and the International Team. Your host should also provide you with their mobile phone number, which you should store as a contact on your phone. You should make sure you contact your host regularly with any relevant information (e.g. if you will be late back for your evening meal).

You must also add the College emergency number to your phone in case you need to contact us urgently.

Your whereabouts and curfews

Please make sure you communicate with your host if you will be late home or if your plans change. Always let them know where you will be going.

- All students under-18 **cannot be left alone overnight**. For further advice, please contact the International Team on 01590 625325.
- All students under-18 must return to their accommodation by 10:00pm from Sunday through to Thursday and 11:00pm Friday and Saturday. This time may be set earlier if your parent/guardian wishes.
- Any student under-18 who wishes to stay away overnight must have written permission from their parent/guardian

in advance. This must be obtained through the International Department. A completed overnight permission form must be presented to the International Team at least 48 hours in advance. The International Office must have full details of the person with whom you will stay overnight (name, address, telephone number, relationship to you) before they consider the request.

You should always be on time for meals with your host. If you know you will be late or do not require a meal, it is your responsibility to let your host know in plenty of time.

Supervision

The Homestay programme encourages you to develop independence and maturity. While your host will provide you with a welcoming, safe and secure home environment, the extent to which the College supervises you during your stay is inevitably limited, especially during the evenings, at night and weekends. You will be expected to communicate any issues arising either directly with your host or the International Team.

Travel

As a Zone A student, you will be within walking distance of the College. The Brockenhurst and New Forest area is generally very safe, but it is advisable to avoid walking home alone at night.

Students living in Zones B-D will require a journey to College, normally by bus or train. The College has several dedicated bus services that will bring you onto campus in the morning and drop you at a stop near your Homestay in the afternoon. If you travel by train, the station in Brockenhurst is a short walk from the College.

If you choose to use a bicycle, you should make sure you wear a cycle helmet and have working lights and a bell on the bicycle. You should also lock your bike securely when you are leaving it anywhere.

The cost of your travel is included in your accommodation fees unless otherwise stated. You will be able to collect your travel pass (either bus or train) within a short time after you start at the College. Please be aware, however, that there may be a period of around one week at the beginning of term when you will need to purchase tickets.

Recreational activities

Your Homestay host will give you the opportunity to participate in various activities during your stay, but there is no formal arrangement for a programme of activities. We encourage all Homestay students to take advantage of Enrichment opportunities within the College and to participate in any relevant educational or recreational visits. You may ask for advice from the International Team at any time.

Accommodation fees and related information

Accommodation fees are charged annually at the beginning of the academic year. We offer the option, for those who request it in advance, to pay the accommodation fees in three equal instalments in September, December and March. Accommodation fees are paid directly to the College and your host will be paid by us. Your fees cover the whole academic year, including half-term holidays, the Easter holidays and the Christmas holidays.

The fee does not cover the Summer holidays, and you will not be able to stay with your host family during that period. Your host family may also wish to, and need to use their bedrooms for family and other visitors, as well as summer school students from Brockenhurst College or other language schools. Please discuss with your host family what they need you to do with your belongings – they may be able to store some of your things, but they will likely need you to pack them up into bags and boxes to be stored in a garage or attic.

It would be in your best interests to take any valuable items with you, and to ensure that any items made from natural materials are protected from wet weather and damp conditions.

If you wish to change Homestay accommodation or leave the accommodation early, you must speak with the International Team in advance. There is no automatic refund of accommodation fees if you choose to leave early. You should give at least one week's notice in writing to your host and the International Team if you plan to leave your Homestay accommodation.

In the unlikely event that the College needs to move you from one host to another, where the Zone you are moving to is charged at a lower fee, we will credit your account with the difference. If it is your final year, we will refund the difference.

Breakages/damages

It is expected that household items are subject to normal wear and tear and that accidents do happen. If you break or damage something in your Homestay accommodation, you should report it to your host immediately. It may be required that you pay to replace or repair the damaged item(s).

Insurance

You are advised to take out personal contents insurance before coming to the College. This is to insure expensive items such as laptops and mobile phones. The College can take no responsibility for loss or damage.

Concerns/problems

If you have any concerns or problems with your Homestay accommodation, you are encouraged to first attempt to resolve the issue with your host directly. If this is not possible, or you would prefer the International Team to intervene, you

should come and speak to our International Student Experience Officer as soon as possible. Most issues are resolved easily and quickly.

If you wish to change host family during the academic year, you will need to discuss this with the International Team. All students are offered the opportunity to move to a different Homestay at the end of the academic year.

Wellbeing, safety and security

Illness and Injury

You are expected to register with your host's local doctor if you are studying with us for more than six months. Your host will help you with this process soon after your arrival. The International Team will provide you with a supporting letter, which you must take with you when you register.

If you become unwell while in the UK and are unable to come in to college, you must tell your host family, and, if you are under-18, they must contact the College to inform us of your absence. If you are over-18 at the start of the academic year, we may allow you to self-certify your illnesses depending on your overall attendance and performance levels. If necessary, you should make an appointment with your doctor.

The College also has onsite nurses and a Medical Room, which is available from 9:00am to 4:00pm Monday-Friday during term-time. The Medical Room and Treatment Room are located next to the International Office in M Block. Nurses are available either by appointment or on a drop-in basis. There are also a number of first-aiders onsite should you require them. Two members of the International Team are qualified emergency first-aiders.

Student Liaison & Security Officer

The role of the Student Liaison and Security Officer is to provide you with a familiar, consistent and accessible presence with regard to your safety and security on the

College campus. They will quickly respond to any incidents on campus and will give support and advice as necessary.

Fire Safety

Within 24 hours of your arrival at your Homestay accommodation your host will show you how and where to exit the property in the event of a fire. This advice will include where any keys to windows and doors are kept. Please pay attention to this information in case you should ever need it.

All Homestay accommodation comes equipped with fitted and working smoke detectors. If the alarm sounds, you should leave the property immediately through the nearest fire exit.

All hosts must provide us with an annual gas safety certificate, which certifies that any gas appliances are in good working order.

Important Telephone Numbers

The number for the following emergency services is **999**:

- Police
- Ambulance
- Fire Service
- Coastguard

For non-emergency medical advice, you may call **111**.

The College's emergency phone number, which is operated by members of the International Team and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, is **07970 069822**. You are advised to add this number to your mobile phone in case you ever need it.

Supported education

The College is committed to ensuring access to its courses for all students and will offer the level of additional support necessary to make this possible. If you have additional needs, you must make sure that the College is aware of these so that suitable arrangements can be made.

The College has a dedicated Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Co-ordinator who can support you. Depending on your circumstances, additional costs may apply.

If you have particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs, you are advised to discuss these at interview before you arrive.

Departure from Homestay accommodation

When you are leaving Homestay accommodation at the end of your residency, please make sure you return your door key to your host and leave a forwarding address, so any mail can be forwarded to you if necessary. You should also contact your bank, mobile phone provider and any other relevant parties to amend or cancel any existing agreements. You will be required to complete a holiday form for any College holidays and your final departure, informing us of your flight details (if applicable) and any onward travel arrangements.

Feedback

Once a term you will be required to complete a questionnaire regarding your experience of Homestay accommodation. This is your opportunity to formally communicate on your feelings regarding your Homestay and will be followed-up with a one-to-one discussion with a member of the International Team. Any actions identified from your feedback will be enacted by a member of the International Team as appropriate. You may give informal feedback on your Homestay accommodation at any time during your stay.

College policies

Smoke Free Policy

This policy has been developed to protect all employees, learners, customers, contractors and visitors from exposure to second-hand smoke and to assist with legislative compliance and government recommendations.

The policy is also designed to promote health in the workplace and to support staff and/or learners who would like to stop smoking.

It is recognised that exposure to second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease, asthma and other recognised health effects. Ventilation or separating smokers from non-smokers within the same air space does not completely stop potentially hazardous exposure.

In consideration of people's health, all college premises are designated as non-smoking (including e-cigarettes), except for designated smoking shelters at some sites. Your host is within their rights to forbid you from smoking inside the Homestay accommodation. They may allow you to smoke in an outside space, but you must first ask permission and take responsibility for clearing away any rubbish.

British values

British values are defined as: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Homestay providers are expected to encourage students to respect other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. These are: race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, religion and belief, pregnancy, and marriage and civil partnership status. Importantly, the spirit of this legislation is entirely consistent with the ethos of the College.

Guidelines for under-18s living in Homestay accommodation

All students under-18 must abide by the curfew referred to in 'Your whereabouts and curfews'. You will receive our Curfew Form before your arrival, which you and

your parent/guardian must sign to signify your agreement. Your parent/guardian may choose to set an earlier curfew than the standard expectations outlined in this guide.

All students under-18 must have written permission from your parent/guardian to stay overnight somewhere other than your Homestay accommodation, which must be presented to the International Team at least 48 hours in advance.

All students must provide their host with their mobile phone number and an emergency contact number.

All students under-18 will be required to complete a termly Homestay feedback form and meet for a welfare interview with a member of the International Team to discuss their Homestay accommodation. Any student under-18 may occasionally be placed with another student that is over-18 on arrival. In any such instances, parent/guardian written consent will be sought in advance. Parents/guardians will also be asked to provide written consent to allow an under-18 to stay in their existing Homestay if another student turns 18 during their stay.

Data protection

All personal information that Brockenhurst College holds is processed in accordance with current UK data protection legislation. The College is the data controller and contact details for our Data Protection Officer can be found on our website. The information you provide will be used for Homestay purposes only. Your data will be shared with your host. We will contact you when necessary in relation to your studies, attendance, Homestay or disciplinary matters. For more information about how we use your data, please see our full privacy notice at <https://www.brock.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-policies/>

You can find more information about GDPR from the Information Commissioners Office at www.ico.org.uk

Complaints

Brockenhurst College welcomes feedback on all aspects of its provision and service. If we fall below the standards one of our stakeholders expects, we need to know how and why this has happened so we can resolve the situation and alter process or approach as necessary. We encourage issues to be resolved informally in the first instance, though it is your right for any complaint to be dealt with formally from the outset if you wish.

Homestay students are able to make a complaint about any issue relating to the College that is of concern to them. All complaints received by the College will be logged, taken seriously and treated sensitively. However, the formal complaints procedure will be considered only where complaints concern issues that have arisen within the last three-years unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If a member of the public or a student at the College is not satisfied with the response to a complaint, Ofsted can be contacted directly regarding any issues related to students under-18.

The website is www.ofsted.gov.uk and the email address is enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

The postal address is:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 4666

Key Brock contacts

NAME	ROLE	TELEPHONE	EMAIL
24 Hour Homestay Emergency Line	Out of hours emergency contact.	+44 (0)7970 069822	N/A
Paul Spanner	International Manager	+44 (0)1590 625305	pspanner@brock.ac.uk
Samantha Ettle	International Student Experience Officer	+44 (0)1590 625413	settle@brock.ac.uk
Steve Jenkin	Assistant Principal and Student Wellbeing	+44 (0)1590 625381	sjenkin@brock.ac.uk
College Absence Line	Reporting student sickness absences.	+44 (0)1590 625530	attendance@brock.ac.uk
College Reception	General contact.	+44 (0)1590 625555	enquiries@brock.ac.uk
International Office	Homestay and/or international student information.	+44 (0)1590 625325	international@brock.ac.uk

Other useful contacts

NAME	ROLE	TELEPHONE	EMAIL
Childline	A free, private and confidential service to help with things from abuse and bullying to exam stress and relationships.	0800 11 11	N/A
Samaritans	Offers a similar service to Childline.	116 123	jo@samaritans.org
Rape Crisis	Offers a range of support, advocacy, counselling and information relating to sexual violence survivors.	0808 802 9999	rcewinfo@rapecrisis.org.uk

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