



Homestay Handbook for Young Learners

Welcome to Burlington School



This Handbook gives you important information about living in one of our homestays. It will help make your stay with Burlington School more enjoyable

This Handbook has information about your accommodation. Subjects are listed in alphabetical order (A-Z). If you have any problem or question about your accommodation, please speak to us.

Staying in a homestay is an excellent way to improve your English. Make the most of this opportunity. Don't be shy! Talk to your homestay provider and make sure you always ask questions when you don't understand something.

The way people live in London might be different from how they live in your country. You and your homestay provider should show each other respect, and try to understand each other's differences. Please think about your homestay provider, housemates and neighbours, and treat them as you would like to be treated yourself.

We hope you and your homestay provider have a wonderful experience!

Ed West

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Operations and Accommodation Officer

accommodation@burlingtonschool.co.uk



Arrival

When you arrive in London, you will go to your accommodation to rest and settle into your home. Your homestay provider will be there to welcome you and show you around the house. Our providers have years of experience hosting students and are always happy to help - remember to ask if you don't understand something.



Bathroom and toilet

You should be allowed to have a bath or shower every day. Bathrooms can be very busy in the morning so please be considerate of the amount of time you spend there, and check when the other members of the household use the bathroom. Always leave the bathroom clean and tidy after you use it.



Bed linen and blankets

Your homestay provider will give you bed sheets to use during your stay. The homestay provider will wash these for you each week. If you are cold at night, ask your homestay provider for more blankets - don't be shy! Your homestay provider will be happy to help.

Changing your homestay

If you want to change your homestay you must tell the Operations and Accommodation Officers. Usually there is a one-week notice period required. However, if you have a serious problem with your homestay, we can move you immediately.

We work very hard to match students with the best homestay providers, and it is rare that a student is not happy with their placement. However, if this is the case, we will look for another homestay provider for you if there is a valid reason for the homestay change.

Valid reasons include:

- pet allergies
- lack of adequate space and/or facilities
- cleanliness of the house
- disagreement with the homestay family (but if there is a small problem, we will try to resolve it before taking further action)

Reasons NOT for changing homestay family include:

- feeling homesick
- to be placed closer to friends
- not liking other students in the house
- not liking the food
- too far from the school
- family members being too old or too young



Please be aware that the months of July and August are very busy and London receives a high number of international students. Therefore, it is very difficult to find a spare bed. If you decide to change your homestay, please be patient.

Cleaning

Your homestay provider should keep the house clean and tidy. Your homestay provider will vacuum your room and wash your bed sheets and bath towel but you must keep your room tidy.



Conversation

Talking with your homestay provider is a great way to practise your English, so don't feel uncomfortable about chatting with them. Your homestay provider will be happy to talk to you, but remember that they will sometimes be tired or want some privacy.

Culture

British climate, food and culture can be very different from what you are used to. Be patient. It may take a while to adjust. Your homestay provider will be interested in your culture - tell them about life in your country, share your experiences with them.

If you have problems adjusting to life in England, talk to the Safeguarding and Welfare Officer.



Damage

If you break or damage anything in the house you must tell your homestay provider. You will have to pay to repair or replace anything you have broken.

Extending your stay

If you want to stay longer in your homestay, you must inform the Operations and Accommodation Officers. Do not pay the homestay provider for extending your stay. You must pay in the Office.



Food

If you have booked half-board accommodation (breakfast and dinner) or breakfast-only accommodation you must:

- tell your homestay providers if you have special dietary requirements
- be on time for meals. Do not make your homestay provider wait for you
- tell your homestay provider if you are going to miss a meal (otherwise they waste food and time cooking for you)

If you have any allergies or dietary requirements (eg a Muslim or vegetarian diet), let the school know and we will inform your homestay provider. It is always good to remind your homestay provider of any intolerance or allergies you have when you arrive at your new home.

Our homestay providers serve dinner at around 7pm. Please ask your homestay provider what time dinner will be ready and be home on time. Always let your homestay provider know if you are late.

Always ask your homestay provider if you would like to use the kitchen or have something to eat or drink. Always remember to leave the kitchen clean and tidy and don't use it late at night.

Heating

People do not always keep the heating on all day. This may be something new for you. You may need to wear more clothes than you are used to. If you are very cold in your homestay accommodation, please tell your homestay provider. Ask for extra blankets if you are cold at night and ask for a heater for your room if it does not have heating.



Keys

Students under the age of 16 are not given a key to the house as a member of the household will always be present to welcome you home.

Students who are 16-17 years old will be given a key to the house. **DO NOT LOSE IT!** Some keys can be difficult and expensive to replace. If you lose it, you may have to pay to replace it. Ask your homestay provider to explain to you how to lock and unlock the house. Tell your homestay provider if you do not understand it. Some homestays have alarm systems, so it is very important that you pay attention to instructions.

Laundry

Your homestay provider will wash your bed sheets and bath towel. You must wash your own clothes. Ask your homestay provider where the nearest launderette is or if you can use their washing machine.

Leaving your homestay

If you want to leave your homestay you must tell the Operations and Accommodation Officers. If you cancel your homestay, you can use the extra balance to pay for additional classes or for new accommodation but no cash refunds can be issued.

Payment

Do not pay your homestay provider. This is a school rule - always pay the school for your accommodation. The school takes care of the payments to the homestay providers. This rule is to protect our students: if you pay the homestay provider directly we cannot help you if you have problems with the homestay providers during your stay.

Problems

If you have any problems with the homestay during your stay, first speak to your homestay provider. Alternatively, please see the Operations and Accommodation Officers. It is very important that you tell us if you are unhappy.

Rules

Ask your homestay provider about the house rules. For example, you may need to know if:

- you can smoke in the house
- you can use the telephone
- you can use the washing machine
- you can bring your friends home
- there are any rooms in the house that you cannot go into (for example, the homestay provider's bedroom)

Find out the house rules when you arrive. Your homestay provider will be pleased that you asked about it and it will help avoid problems later on.

Staying out late

If you are a student under the age of 16, you are not allowed to go out alone in the evenings. After your classes or social activities, your parent, guardian or group leader will pick you up and take you to your homestay where an adult will always be present.

Alternatively, if you are 14 or 15, and with written consent by your parent(s) or guardian(s), you are allowed to travel to/from the school on your own.

Students aged 16 and 17 can go out on their own but must be home in the evening by 10pm. This is not negotiable, so please don't ask your homestay provider if you can come back any later. If you are far away and need to take a train or bus to get back to your homestay, please ensure you allow plenty of time for travelling to avoid being late. If you arrive home late, the school will be informed and action will be taken.

Study space

Your room should have a desk with a lamp. If it does not, then please let the school know.



Telephone and Internet

Please make sure your family and friends call you at appropriate times. Your homestay provider doesn't want to be woken up at night by late telephone calls. Never advertise your homestay provider's telephone number - for example, if you are looking for a job.

Your homestay provider might allow you to make outgoing calls. Remember that all calls - even local calls - cost money. Always ask your homestay provider before you use the telephone. You might have to use a public pay phone instead. Your homestay provider can tell you where the nearest one is (there is one outside the school); you can also use Skype (the internet is provided throughout the school).



Television

Watching television can be a good way to improve your English. Your homestay provider should let you watch television with the rest of the family. There are written subtitles for programmes, which will help you understand more easily.

Transport

If you are over the age of 14, and we have received permission from your parent or guardian to travel alone to and from the school, ask your homestay provider to show you the way to the nearest bus stop or tube station. They will be happy to give you advice on the best way to travel.



If you are under the age of 14, please wait for your parent, guardian, group leader or member of staff to pick you up and take you to school. Under no circumstances should you travel to and from the school alone.

Please ask in the office about student discounts for transport in London.

Visitors

Always ask before you bring friends home. Please do not expect your homestay provider to provide accommodation for your relatives if they visit England.



Finally...

If you have any problems at any time, speak to your homestay provider or to the Operations and Accommodation Officers at the school.

The school has a 24-hour number if you need to talk to us at night or at the weekend - please call us on **0777 8547 722** (from UK phones) or **+44 777 8547 722** (from non-UK phones)



Burlington School

Excellence in English

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