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Guidelines for Visiting Students and Host Families 2014

General Thoughts

The host family is prepared to offer a home to the overseas student for a three month period (or longer) and the student is prepared to integrate into the family's daily life (which is often very different to that on the continent).

Accommodation

The student should be able to have their own room. If they are asked to share they should be made aware of this before they arrive.

Food

The student is offered breakfast, a big packed lunch, a snack after school and a cooked meal at supper time.

If the family is vegetarian but not the student, then occasionally some meat like salami, ham, etc. should be given for the packed lunch.

If the student is vegetarian but not the family, the student is offered eggs, cheese, nuts, etc. instead of meat.

Laundry

Clothes are washed or access is given to the washing machine.

Transport to and from school

The family offers free transport by car (or pays for the bus ticket to and from school). If the student cycles to school, the parents must have given their permission, and students must wear a safety helmet. When a bike is needed for school games lessons, this is provided by the host family.

Help with homework/housework

Each student needs some help with their homework and the family must be able to do this on a daily basis: communication with Upper School teachers is helpful and often necessary. The host family is strongly advised to attend parents' evenings for their student's class.

The student – as part of the family – must be prepared to help with simple housework (e.g. washing up), in the same way that the family's own children do. The students must keep their room tidy and vacuum the floor when needed.

Telephone Use

In general, the host family bears the cost of the student's short telephone calls to local friends – telephone calls to further afield and to the continent must be paid for by the student. However, these days there are many different phone packages, and some people have unlimited national or even international calls, so each host family may agree with the student what is acceptable to them. In practice these days most students have their own phones. Although we would never try to stop a student contacting his or her parents (or the parents from contacting their children), experience has shown that very frequent contact in the early days of the stay increases homesickness, so we ask families to bear this in mind.

Internet usage

We have had increasing problems with students spending long periods on the internet – it is up to families and students to work out together how long it is reasonable to let the students use the internet for. If there are rules in place in the family for their own children, the visiting student can be expected to follow the same rules. Hours spent on social media or games is not acceptable.

Money Matters

Pocket Money: The students need some pocket money from their own parents for stamps, cinema, sweets, transport to meet friends, as well as spending-money on class trips or class outings. £150 for one term should be enough (suggested maximum £200!) If students have their own bank card, they can usually withdraw money from their account at home as they need it.

Outings

As a guideline the family should offer to take the student on family outings or make it possible for the student to go off on their own to see the area, at least once or twice a month by (for example)

- ◆ Paying for the bus fare to e.g. Exeter, Plymouth, Totnes, etc.
- ◆ Driving the student to such places, or to Dartmoor, to the sea or simply to a classmate.
- ◆ Arranging transport and paying petrol costs to another driver.

If students are taken to places which cost money as part of a family trip (for example, to the cinema or theatre), they should not be required to pay for their own ticket. If they choose to go with their own friends, this is a different matter.

The host family is encouraged to discuss and come to a mutual agreement with the student's parents in the following matters:

- ◆ Going out during the week.
- ◆ Time of return in the evenings and bedtimes.
- ◆ A written agreement with the student's parents is needed if the student wants to hitch-hike in his or her free time (hitch-hiking to and from school is forbidden), as hitch-hiking is potentially dangerous .

School Rules

These are the same for English and Overseas students, and visiting students will be given a printed copy of them when they arrive.

The main points are

- ◆ no smoking, no alcohol, no illegal drugs
- ◆ no mobile phones should be turned on in the school grounds (if students have mobiles for the journey to and from school, these should be kept turned off in their bags)
- ◆ electronic games and music players should not be brought to school (or taken on school trips)

The student and his/her parents understand that the school reserves the right to send a student home in the case of drunkenness, drug abuse, shoplifting or other inappropriate behaviour. They have agreed and accepted this by their signature on the enrolment form before coming to our school. In such cases there will be no refund and return fares will be charged to the student's family.

British Pub Licensing Law and Sale of Tobacco

In Britain it is forbidden by law to sell alcohol to people under the age of 18. You are allowed to enter a pub if you are between 14 –18 if the publican allows this, but not to consume alcohol, only to play pub games and drink non-alcoholic drinks.

It is also now illegal to sell tobacco products to people under 18, and if you try to buy cigarettes, and look under 25, you will be asked for identification documents.

If any serious concerns arise during a student's visit these should be brought to the attention of Susanna Chapman, who will help in the process of resolving them.

Conclusion

All our host families have experience with teenagers and do their best to welcome their student into their home. We hope that ongoing communication and trust will make it an enjoyable time for student and host family alike!

Susanna Chapman

Overseas Student Co-ordinator

Tel: 01803 897377 (in school Tues, Thurs and Fri)

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Email: visit@steiner-south-devon.org (I pick these up from home as well)