



# HOMESTAY HANDBOOK

## HOST VERSION

### 2023/24



# Contents

<b>1. <u>Introduction</u></b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. <u>Dealing With Emergencies</u></b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. <u>Contact Details</u></b>	<b>7</b>
3.1. <u>College Contact Details</u>	7
3.2. <u>Partner Contact Details</u>	7
<b>4. <u>Your Role as a Homestay Host</u></b>	<b>8</b>
4.1. <u>Statutory Requirements</u>	8
4.1.1. <u>Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS)</u>	8
4.1.2. <u>Hosting from Other Institutions</u>	9
4.1.3. <u>Gas Safety Regulations</u>	9
4.1.4. <u>Fire Safety Regulations</u>	10
4.1.5. <u>Electrical Safety</u>	10
4.1.6. <u>Carbon Monoxide Safety</u>	11
4.1.7. <u>Household Inspections</u>	11
4.2. <u>Further Hosting Requirements</u>	11
4.2.1. <u>Room Occupancy</u>	11
4.2.2. <u>Storage Space</u>	12
4.2.3. <u>Study Space</u>	12
4.2.4. <u>Room Size and Access</u>	12
4.2.5. <u>Food</u>	12
4.2.6. <u>Access to the House</u>	13
4.2.7. <u>Bathrooms, Laundry, and Other Facilities</u>	13
4.2.8. <u>Student Arrival and Orientation</u>	14
4.2.9. <u>Host Briefings – 30<sup>th</sup> August</u>	14
4.3. <u>College Forms</u>	14
4.4. <u>Duty of Care</u>	15
4.4.1. <u>Guiding Principles</u>	15
4.4.2. <u>Overnight Care</u>	18
4.4.3. <u>Students Going out in the Evening</u>	18
4.4.3.1. <u>Preparing to Go Out at Night</u>	18
4.4.3.2. <u>Curfews</u>	19
4.4.3.3. <u>Last Buses</u>	20
4.4.4. <u>Relief Hosting</u>	21
4.4.5. <u>Students Staying Away from Home</u>	22
4.5. <u>Communication with College</u>	23
4.5.1. <u>Things You Must Tell Us About</u>	23
4.5.2. <u>Discussions about Students</u>	23
4.5.3. <u>Email</u>	24
4.5.4. <u>Social Media and the Internet</u>	24

<b>5. <u>Working with Your Student</u></b>	<b>24</b>
5.1. <u>Communication</u>	24
5.2. <u>Initial Contact</u>	24
5.3. <u>Arrivals Day</u>	25
5.4. <u>House Rules</u>	25
5.5. <u>Homesickness</u>	25
5.6. <u>Cultural Differences</u>	25
5.6.1. <u>Friends Staying Overnight</u>	26
5.6.2. <u>Laundry</u>	26
5.7. <u>Food</u>	27
5.7.1. <u>Diets</u>	27
5.7.2. <u>Fussy Eaters</u>	27
5.8. <u>Illness/Mental health</u>	27
5.9. <u>Parental Contact</u>	28
<b>6. <u>The College's Role</u></b>	<b>28</b>
6.1. <u>Placing Students</u>	28
6.2. <u>Managing Student Moves</u>	29
6.3. <u>Academic Monitoring</u>	30
6.4. <u>Managing Ill-Discipline</u>	30
6.5. <u>Student Visas</u>	30
6.6. <u>Students with Additional Needs</u>	30
<b>7. <u>Finance, Insurance and Data Management</u></b>	<b>31</b>
7.1. <u>Payment Process</u>	31
7.2. <u>Payment Schedule</u>	33
7.3. <u>Payment Errors</u>	33
7.4. <u>Tax</u>	34
7.5. <u>Insurance and Damage</u>	34
7.6. <u>Home Ownership and Tenancy Rights</u>	34
7.7. <u>Data Management</u>	34
<b>8. <u>Safeguarding</u></b>	<b>35</b>
8.1. <u>Reporting Concerns</u>	35
8.2. <u>Protecting Yourself</u>	36
8.3. <u>Level 1 Safeguarding Training Course</u>	37
<b>APPENDICES</b>	
A. <u>Homestay Host Checklist</u>	39
B. <u>Key Dates 2023/24</u>	41
C. <u>Payment Schedule 2023/24</u>	42
D. <u>Minimum Standards Agreement (copy)</u>	43
E. <u>Parental Delegation Form</u>	45
F. <u>Student Accommodation Agreement</u>	46
G. <u>Social Media Policy</u>	47
H. <u>Complaints and Compliments Procedure</u>	49



## 1. Introduction

Our homestay handbook for 2023/24 contains updated information about your role as a homestay host and outlines how we will work with you over the coming year. You may be a new host, or you may have hosted our students for many years. In either case, we would like to thank you for choosing to host students for York College.

A summary of the most important information is contained in the appendices. However, we encourage you to read the main document thoroughly and refer to it whenever needed.

## 2. Dealing with Emergencies

**In the event of an emergency, your first call should *always* be to the **emergency services (999)**.**

Once you have contacted the emergency services and you are sure that help is on the way, you should inform the relevant partner organisation, and then the College.

### **Akademiet (Agent for Norwegian students)**

Jon Bell	07562 185 095	jon.bell@akademiet.no
Jon Bell (Out of Hours)	03300 883 720	N/A

### **Barnes Educational Services (Agent for Swiss & Other international students)**

Catherine Staniforth	07854 973 546	catherine66@live.co.uk
Ric Carby	07748 113 782	ric@barnes-educational.co.uk

### **Additional agents/representatives for other international students**

Select Studies	07412 368 443	admissions@selectstudies.co.uk
Embrace England	07930 227 253	jim@embraceengland.co.uk

### **International Team**

**Office Hours only: Mon-Thurs (9am-5pm) / Friday (9am-4:30pm)**

Hannah Thomas	01904 770 486	accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk
Jude Horner	OR 01904 770 490	OR international@yorkcollege.ac.uk

In the event of no-one being available in the International Office, if you consider the matter to be urgent, call the College reception and ask them to contact Judith Lawson. Please note, Judith is a teaching member of staff and so cannot leave classes, except in the case of a serious emergency.

**Outside working hours, the College has an out-of-hours number: +44 1757 244 473**

This number will put you into contact with a member of the College's Senior Management Team, who will be able to support you. The out-of-hours number should only be used in the event of an acutely urgent scenario. For our purposes this includes, but is not limited to:

- Any incident where a 999 call has been made (call us **only** after speaking with 999).
- Any situation in which the student has been hospitalised.
- Any situation in which there has been significant police involvement (e.g. an arrest).
- Any situation in which there is a serious problem with your property (e.g. a fire).

**Please note:** If the situation can wait until the next working day, for example damage to the property, we ask that hosts avoid contacting the out-of-hours College number.

## 3. Contact Details

### 3.1. College Contact Details

Name	Contact details	What they do
<b>Judith Lawson</b> Head of International +44 (0) 1904 770 269	<a href="mailto:jlawson@yorkcollege.ac.uk">jlawson@yorkcollege.ac.uk</a> Room 3F102	<p>The team are available to assist all international students.</p> <p>They also support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation enquiries</li> <li>• Homestay applications and approval</li> <li>• Student allocations/moves</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> The International phonelines and inboxes are shared between the whole team.</p>
<b>Hannah Thomas</b> International Manager +44 (0) 1904 770 486	<a href="mailto:accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk">accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk</a>  or <a href="mailto:international@yorkcollege.ac.uk">international@yorkcollege.ac.uk</a>	
<b>Jude Horner</b> Clerical Assistant +44 (0) 1904 770 490	Room 2F018 (International Office)  Mon – Thurs (9am - 5pm) Friday (9am – 4:30pm)	

### 3.2. Partner Contact Details

Most students in homestay accommodation study at the College with the help of a partner organisation. These partners organise their applications and offer additional support during their time in the UK. The contact details for our major partners are listed below:

#### Akademiet

Akademiet support students from Norway. Jon Bell is the local contact and will run the out of hours number for these students.

Jon Bell	07562 185 095	<a href="mailto:jon.bell@akademiet.no">jon.bell@akademiet.no</a>
Jon Bell (Out of Hours)	03300 883 720	N/A

#### Barnes Educational Services (Swiss and some other international students)

Barnes support all students on our Swiss programme as well as some of our other international students (you will be told if your student has come through Barnes).

Catherine is locally based, and Rachel Carby and Ric Carby are based in the West Country but are available to students who need assistance. Barnes should be the first port of call if you need support outside normal office hours.

Catherine Staniforth	07854 973 546	catherine66@live.co.uk
Ric Carby	07748 113 782	ric@barnes-educational.co.uk
Rachel Carby	01179 041 137	rachel@barnes-educational.co.uk

### Other partner organisations

The College works with other organisations. Here is a list of those you may encounter:

Select Studies	07412 368 443	admissions@selectstudies.co.uk
Embrace England	07930 227 253	jim@embraceengland.co.uk

## 4. Your Role as a Homestay Host

Being a homestay host means providing a safe and supportive environment for a young person in a foreign country who may have never lived away from home before.

This handbook contains many rules and regulations which you need to know about and adhere to, however, we recognise that there are other main qualities that you will need, including kindness, hospitality, being interested in your student, and often, a sense of humour. Most of our students are under 18 years of age and we rely on your patience, care, and support to make our students feel at home.

### 4.1. Statutory Requirements

All College requirements for homestay providers are guided by government regulations, most of which are outlined in a document called the *National Minimum Standards for the Accommodation of Students under 18 by Further Education Colleges*. This document was produced by the Department of Health and is available in full online:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/701019/FE\\_Residential\\_Accommodation\\_National\\_Minimum\\_Standards.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/701019/FE_Residential_Accommodation_National_Minimum_Standards.pdf)

The Government and other organisations set the rules and guidance about hosting students. It is a shared responsibility between the host and the College to ensure that the rules are followed. When we say that a homestay provider “must” do something it is usually because it is a part of the National Minimum Standards or other statutory regulations.

#### 4.1.1. Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS)

All homestay hosts who are 18 or older (or who will turn 18 before 31<sup>st</sup> August in the next academic year) will need to complete an enhanced DBS criminal record check, which will tell us if anyone in the property is barred from working with children, as well as provide details of any previous criminal



convictions they might have. The cost of the checks is covered by the College, and we will recheck all hosts every four years.

Having a prior criminal conviction will not necessarily ban you from being a homestay provider, but this will depend on the nature and the severity of the conviction. It is our policy that we will discuss the nature of any reported activity, however minor or historical, with the individual concerned.

Some people who are only resident in the property for part of the year will still need to do a DBS check: for example, children who are away at university but return regularly during the holidays. That may also include people who regularly spend the night at the property, such as friends or partners. It is important that you keep us updated with changes in circumstances that might mean additional people need to be DBS checked.

For the avoidance of doubt, we need to check anyone expected to be resident for **30 days or more** each year. This includes those who live in an annex, 'granny flat' or similar at your address. Any exceptions to this rule are outlined below.

### 4.1.2. Hosting from Other Institutions

We are aware that some hosts look after students studying at other institutions. We also know that some may host other paying guests. Since September 2017 we have asked that all hosts inform us of any paying guest, supplying the following information:

- Date of arrival
- Date of departure (where known and an estimate if not known)
- Name, gender, and nationality of the guest
- Name of the institution where they are studying or working (if applicable)

**Please note** that we will not systematically conduct DBS checks on paying guests. We anticipate that most will not be residents for extended periods and in most cases, they will not have been a resident in the United Kingdom for sufficient time for such checks to be meaningful. However, we still reserve the right to conduct a DBS check if we deem it appropriate.

### 4.1.3. Gas Safety Regulations

Homestay providers have a legal requirement to follow the guidelines set out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) for landlords. A big part of this is to conduct a gas safety check annually and inform us of the outcome. By far the easiest way of doing this is to have a registered Gas Safe engineer perform an annual Landlord's Gas Safety Check on the property. This is a standard check which most major suppliers will be qualified to perform.

Directory of registered engineers: <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/find-an-engineer/>

Once the check has been carried out, the engineer will provide you with a certificate on the day, which should be retained for your records. You need to send a copy of this certificate to us by post or a scan /photo version by email. In either case, you need to retain an original copy, as we will not return certificates to you as a matter of course.

#### Reminder Emails

The College will send you an email 6 weeks prior to the date that your existing check expires. This is a reminder that you need to arrange for a repeat inspection. Please inform the International team

once you have booked an inspection date. Unless you notify us, we will follow up with reminder email in advance of the expiry date.

Please aim to conduct your check and submit the form to us no later than two weeks prior to the expiry date on your original certificate.

### **Moving the Student**

If you have not made arrangements for the check to be carried out less than two weeks prior to the expiry date, we will make efforts to remove the student, as we cannot permit the student to stay with you after the certificate has expired.

It is for this reason that we ask you to have the check done slightly in advance. Please note that we must see the certificate before the expiry date to verify that the check has been done.

Under revisions to the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Amendment Regulations 1998, the inspection can now be carried out two months before the expiry date of the current certificate while still preserving that original expiry date. There is therefore no reason to wait until the last minute to have the inspection done.

Landlords – including homestay providers – are also now required by law to keep records of the gas safety inspections ‘until there have been two further checks of the flue or appliance in question’. If appliances are removed the records must be kept for two years from the date of the last check.

For more information about gas safety and how to keep your gas record up to date, you can use the HSE’s website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/landlords/index.htm>

## **4.1.4. Fire Safety Regulations**

Homestay providers are required to complete a fire risk assessment of their property prior to hosting. We will supply a form for you to record this assessment and a copy should be given to the College. You should consider the following matters as a minimum:

- Evacuation procedures for all members of the household, including students,
- Fire risks and how to manage these appropriately (e.g. use of candles, phone chargers, etc.),
- Equipment needed to reduce the risk of fire.

**It is a legal requirement for hosts with paying guests to install smoke detectors.**

These should be installed on every floor of the property. Ideally, they should be wired into the mains. In all cases they should be tested monthly.

Also, we ask that you discuss the management of fire risk, including evacuation procedures, with any new student who comes to live with you. As part of this discussion, you should explain how to call the Fire Brigade (999) to report a fire. Students are also provided with that information in their Welcome Pack, Student Homestay Handbook and in a briefing as part of their College induction.

The official government guidelines about fire safety can be found online:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-sleeping-accommodation>

## **4.1.5. Electrical Safety**

You must be satisfied that both the electrical installation (such as plug sockets and light switches) and any electrical equipment (such as kettles, toasters etc) in your house are safe to use.

### 4.1.6. Carbon Monoxide Safety

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless gas that can kill quickly and without warning. CO is produced by faulty or poorly ventilated appliances such as boilers, fires, or ovens. CO alarms provide an early warning if CO is present. Just like a smoke alarm, it could save your life. Alarms are increasingly affordable and widely available in hardware stores.

Since 2015, it has been a legal requirement for all those with paying guests to install a CO alarm in any room used as living accommodation where solid fuel or gas is used, which may include the following areas:

- In the same room as your gas boiler,
- In any room containing an appliance that burns solid fuel or gas, i.e. gas hob, log burner.

If your CO alarm sounds or you think an appliance is leaking carbon monoxide the Health and Safety Executive advises the following:

- **Call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999**
- *Switch off the appliance and shut off the gas supply at the meter control valve,*
- *Open all doors and windows to ventilate the room,*
- *Visit your GP and tell him/her that you believe you have been exposed to carbon monoxide.*

More information from the HSE about CO in the home is available here:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/co.htm>

### 4.1.7. Household Inspections

Hosts are visited as part of their application to become a homestay host. In addition, all hosts are visited annually by at least one member of the York College staff team. Occasionally, representatives from our partner organisations will attend, and reserve the right to do so.

During these visits, we will inspect all the areas of the house that students are allowed to access. The visit is also an opportunity for you to chat about your experiences of being a host and to ask any questions you may have.

As well as inspections by York College, there are a few other organisations who may need to inspect your property. These could include OFSTED. We will give you as much notice as possible in the event of such an inspection.

## 4.2. Further Hosting Requirements

This section lays out the minimum requirements that are expected from a York College homestay host. These are in addition to the details in the previous section.

### 4.2.1. Room Occupancy

All students are required to have their own bedroom. Students are not permitted to share a room under any circumstances, even if the student requests it. Occasional 'sleepovers' are an exception to this and managed by the mutual consent of students and hosts.

### 4.2.2. Storage Space

Each student needs adequate storage space for their belongings. Their room needs to have a wardrobe and a chest of drawers in which they can store their clothes. We would not expect or recommend that there is a lock on the student's bedroom door. However, there needs to be a secure space for students to store things which is not accessible to other members of the household and for which the other residents do not have a key. This space needs to be large enough to store small valuable items such as a mobile phone, a wallet/purse, and important documents such as a passport or financial statements.

This storage space can take a variety of forms, for example, it could be an item of furniture that is lockable, a drawer with a padlock, a petty cash box, or a small lockbox / safe.

### 4.2.3. Study Space

Studying is one of the main reasons why our students come to the UK, so providing them with the space to do this is very important. The student's bedroom needs to include a study area which has a desk that is large enough to work on. The study area also needs to be well lit during the day and must have adequate lighting from a lamp or similar during the evening. We do stress that the study space should be in the student's bedroom, but where this isn't possible, there must be a dedicated space (e.g. home office) that the student can access at all times.

### 4.2.4. Room Size and Access

The student's room needs to be large enough to store their belongings. The room also needs to be large enough to comfortably study in for extended periods of time. The National Minimum Standards document stipulates in footnote 13 of clause 39.6 that:

"Where reference to a physical space standard is required in assessing borderline or disputed room sizes, or in planning new accommodation, the guidelines should be followed of at least 7.5m<sup>2</sup> of usable floor area for a single bedroom and is at least 2.15m wide. 'Usable floor area' includes bedroom floor taken up by room furniture or behind closed doors when open, but not unfurnished areas below low or sloping ceilings where students cannot stand upright..."

This would, for example, equate to a bedroom of approximately 8 feet x 8 feet. Please note that Part K of the UK building regulations requires that the distance between the top of a staircase and the lowest point of the ceiling above the stairs is a minimum of 2m, in usual circumstances, and 1.8m for loft conversions. Also, the minimum gradient for a staircase leading to a loft conversion is 42°. The full regulations are available at the link below:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/996860/Approved\\_Document\\_K.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/996860/Approved_Document_K.pdf)

### 4.2.5. Food

Hosts are required to provide students with the following meals whenever the student is resident:

- Breakfast and an evening meal seven days a week,
- Lunch at weekends and on public holidays, but not half term or other College holidays.

Students may not be able to tolerate traditional British foods, especially if this is very different from foods their bodies are used to. We encourage all hosts to talk with their students and to be mindful of their culture and staple diets in their home country.

Some hosts will provide additional food for students such as snacks. Whilst we see this as a positive thing, it is not an absolute requirement. We ask that you discuss your household policy on this issue with your student as soon as possible after they move in, as it is important that everyone knows where they stand (see House Rules, Section 5.4).

We sometimes receive queries from agents about lunches in holidays, especially at half term breaks, when students are likely to stay in the homestay. We are happy for you to come to individual arrangements about this, whether you provide something for a sandwich or encourage students to prepare their own lunch. Please let us know if this seems to cause any problems.

As a host it is your responsibility to make sure that the food you provide is nutritious and constitutes a balanced diet. British diets have a poor reputation globally and it is great if hosts challenge this!

If you would like to learn more about nutrition, then the NHS Choices website is a useful source of information: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>

In addition to the food you provide, you must give students space to store their own food and space to prepare it. This should include fridge, freezer, and cupboard space. The College's absolute requirement is for there to be space given to prepare cold food. We do not require you to provide space for students to prepare hot food, even though some students may request this. We hope that you will do what you can to meet such requests, although you are not obliged to do so.

For more information, the NHS offer practical advice about food hygiene:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/how-to-store-food-and-leftovers/>

The Food Standards Agency also have a useful feature that includes alerts for food that has been recalled due to allergy or other safety concerns: <https://www.food.gov.uk/>

## 4.2.6. Access to the House

All students must be given their own key to the house. Under no circumstances should they make a copy of the key or lend it to anyone without your permission. Students are required to return the key when leaving the property for the final time and must tell you immediately if their key is lost.

## 4.2.7. Bathrooms, Laundry, and Other Facilities

Students should be given access to all communal areas of the property used by members of the household. We would expect this to include the kitchen, dining room, living room, garden etc. This does not, however, include bedrooms.

Students should have use of a bathroom with a lockable door. This may be a shared family bathroom, or a bathroom used only by the student.

Provision should also be made for washing clothes. It is acceptable for the student to do this, or for the host to do it. However, the precise details should be agreed mutually (see Section 5.6.2).

## 4.2.8. Student Arrival and Orientation

During the first few days, we ask that all hosts work with us to ensure that the students settle in well. In particular, we require hosts to do the following:

- Travel to College on arrival day to collect their student and take them home. If you have more than one student, you may need to make multiple trips due to different arrival times.
- Ensure that students know how to get to College the day after arrival day. You do not need to take them to College yourself, but they need to be confident that they can make the journey. You should also ensure they know the directions home and have a way of contacting you in case they get lost.
- Assist students with registering with a GP practice within one month of their arrival in York.
- Make students aware of local services, including but not limited to:
  - Supermarkets and other shops.
  - Public transport routes, bus stops, etc.
  - Sports and leisure facilities.

In addition, we ask that you discuss various matters mentioned elsewhere, including:

- Fire safety
- Security in the home
- Food
- Laundry
- Going out at night / curfew times
- Friends and guests
- Other house rules

**Please note** when driving into the College, you should not use the bus/taxi entrance on Tadcaster Road. This will incur a fine, no matter what time of day or night, and we will have no authority to cancel this. The main entrance to College is off Sim Balk Lane.

## 4.2.9. Host Briefing – 30<sup>th</sup> August

This year, the homestay briefing will take place on 30<sup>th</sup> August at 6pm. It will last approximately 1 hour, and we encourage all hosts (new and existing) to attend. This is a chance for us to set the scene for the year ahead, and a great opportunity for you to ask any questions.

## 4.3. College Forms

As well as forms mentioned earlier, hosts are required to complete the following before hosting:

- **Homestay Hosting Preferences (online link - completed annually)**  
This is an online form used to gather information about your availability and hosting preferences for the coming academic year. This information is very important to us when matching students with hosts. We require this information to be resubmitted annually. We request this each spring using a weblink issued via email. This link is also sent to new hosts.
- **Homestay Minimum Standards Agreement (completed annually)**  
This form is a summary of what you need to provide to students who live with you. This needs to be signed and dated by each adult member of the household. Being a homestay

provider for York College is conditional on maintaining these standards. A copy of this form is available in [Appendix E](#) of this document.

- **BACS Details (completed whenever you change bank details)**  
All payments to homestay providers are paid via the Bank's Automated Clearing System (BACS), so we require a completed BACS Details form. We cannot pay you without this form. The form is available upon request.

## 4.4. Duty of Care

This section describes your duty of care towards students. It gives advice about the legal powers and responsibilities which homestay hosts have and about the relationship between you, the student, their parents, and the College. We also provide guidance on what this means in practice. We ask that you always treat students with dignity and respect.

The requirements listed in this section apply to all students. However, some variations do exist depending on whether the student is younger or older than 18. As a rule of thumb, a student who is over 18 can provide any consent that would, in the case of a younger student, require the permission of their parents.

### 4.4.1. Guiding Principles

The fundamental assumption upon which we have based our guidance is that as a homestay host, you agree to undertake a duty of care for any young person who lives with you. That is, you have a responsibility for their wellbeing and safety. This begins the moment you first meet them on arrivals day to the moment they leave your presence on the specified departure day, be that Christmas, Easter or at the end of the year. Your duty of care does not apply in the following circumstances:

- Whenever a student is travelling to and from the UK.
- Whenever a parent provides written consent for a student to travel independently, stay elsewhere overnight or when they are with their parents (see Section 4.4.5)
- During holidays when a student is not in the UK (e.g. Christmas)
- Whenever students are on trips and activities that are arranged by our partner organisations (e.g. Heltberg trip to London later in the year).
- When the student was in the care of the College (e.g. during a normal College day, or on a College trip). However, you would have a duty of care whenever a student was travelling to and from College or at other times (e.g. going to the cinema in the evening).

In order to understand what having a duty of care means in practice it is important to explore the relationship between a duty of care and parental responsibility.

#### **Who has parental responsibility for a student aged under 18?**

The Children Act 1989 outlines very particular and legally constituted circumstances in which an individual is granted parental responsibility for a child. Usually this means that an individual must be the parent of the young person or have been appointed as their legal guardian by a court. Therefore, in legal terms, homestay hosts do not have formal "parental responsibility" under any circumstances; their role is limited to a duty of care. However, they can assume the right to act on a parent's behalf if the parent agrees to this.

The Act includes the following clauses about the role of someone with a duty of care and the ability of a parent to nominate another person to act on their behalf:

“A person who does not have parental responsibility for a particular child; but has care of the child, may... do what is reasonable in all the circumstances... for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child’s welfare.” (Children Act 1989, Section 3.5)

“A person who has parental responsibility for a child may not surrender or transfer any part of that responsibility to another but may arrange for some or all of it to be met by one or more persons acting on his [or her] behalf.” (Children Act 1989, Section 2.9)

### **What does this mean homestay hosts can (and cannot) do?**

- You are legally entitled to act (and indeed should act) to the best of your ability to ensure the student in your care is safe and well. This means that you are entitled to make “reasonable” decisions about their care to protect them.
- The student’s parent or guardian (i.e. someone with parental responsibility) may delegate authority for you to act as their representative. This does not mean you have parental responsibility, but it does mean you can act as if you do for virtually all practical purposes. For our purposes, this is what is meant by the term *in loco parentis* (in the place of parent).
- If you do not have this delegated authority, you do not have the right to claim that you can act in the place of a parent. For example, you should not sign any form that requires the consent of a parent or guardian, (e.g. for trips, participation in contact sports etc.)

### **How do I get the authority to act *in loco parentis*?**

If you want the delegated authority to act *in loco parentis* you require the written consent of the student’s parent. For some students this is a requirement of their programme (e.g. those supported by Barnes Educational Services). For other students it is not a formal requirement. However, it may still be something you wish to explore with your students and their parents.

The College believes that provided there is mutual agreement between hosts, parents, and students, we should not stand in the way of any action that establishes the hosts’ right to act *in loco parentis*.

To support this, we have provided an example of the words that could be used by the parent to do this. A copy of this form is included in Appendix F of this handbook. It will also be made available to students and their parents in advance of the new academic year.

### **Can a parent withdraw a host’s right to act *in loco parentis*?**

Yes, they can withdraw this right at any time. It is also worth noting that they always retain parental responsibility, even if they have delegated the authority for someone else to act on their behalf.

### **Can parents override decisions made by a homestay host (or the College)?**

It is possible for them to do this, irrespective of whether the host has the right to act *in loco parentis*.

**HOWEVER**, consider the following:

- Provided you act reasonably (this is the legal term) to safeguard the student’s wellbeing, you would have legal protection should a parent challenge your actions after the event. The child’s parent would have to prove that you acted unreasonably.



- If a parent requests that you act in a way contrary to what you think is appropriate to safeguard the wellbeing of their child, you have every right to challenge them. Ultimately, if the student is to remain in your care, you should be comfortable with the arrangements that are made to support them. An example of where this issue may arise is discussed in the section about curfews (Section 4.4.3.2).
- Ultimately, staying in homestay requires that the College and the host maintain their duty of care. As such, we judge that a parent may only directly countermand the reasonable judgement of the host (or more fully the collective judgement of the host and the College) by withdrawing their consent for us to provide care. This will inevitably result in the student's withdrawal from their programme.
- Equally, there may be occasions where the College feels that providing care for a particular student is no longer a viable option (e.g. due to serious ill-discipline or because continued support for the student presents too great a safeguarding risk). If this happens, we may decide that the only option is for them to be withdrawn from the programme and be returned to the care of their parents.

### **What is a guardian?**

The meaning depends on the context. The term *guardian* is used by several of the College's partners, and occasionally by the College, to mean an individual or organisation with the delegated authority to act on behalf of the parent. Strictly speaking, this is a slightly different thing to someone who is the student's legally appointed Guardian and who has full parental responsibility.

### **What is a child?**

In safeguarding terms, a child is anyone who is under 18. In that sense, we have a collective responsibility to care for students as if they were children. This is why many of our regulations exist and why the National Minimum Standards referred to in Section 4.1 apply to homestay. However, there are circumstances where a young person may have the right to act with the same authority as an adult would. For example, anyone over the age of 16 is legally entitled to engage in consensual sexual activity without the permission of their parent or guardian, or any other third party. More generally, the law, and the interpretation of it, is designed to take the views of a child into account.

The implication of this is that homestay hosts cannot completely disregard the will of their student, nor can the College. However, as with the parent who may disagree with our approach, to maintain our duty of care (and so for a student to maintain their participation on the programme) you and the College need to be comfortable that you are not being asked to act in a manner that you consider to be inappropriate (or in legal terms "unreasonable").

In practice, all those involved, whether it is the College, the homestay host, the student, or their parents, need to work together to find solutions that are acceptable to everyone. The College plays a key role in this and if you encounter significant differences of opinion that you cannot resolve, please let us know as soon as possible.

### **What if the law is different in the student's country of origin? Does that matter?**

No. Whilst the student is resident in York, they and we are subject to English law. This is made clear in all our contracts and other arrangements with partners.

### **Further reading:**

- The Children Act 1989: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

- NSPCC, Definitions of a Child: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/legal-definition-child-rights-law/legal-definitions/>

## 4.4.2 Overnight Care

Students who are under 18 should never be left in the house alone overnight. There **must always** be at least one registered adult present in the property. This person must have been approved by the College, which includes having undergone a DBS check arranged by the College, or having submitted an alternative DBS certificate that has been witnessed by the College. The same rule applies to students who are over 18 on the following programmes:

- Akademiet
- Barnes (including Swiss students)
- High Schools International
- Select Studies

For the avoidance of doubt, we expect that under normal circumstances a registered adult is present in the property between the hours of 11pm and 6am. We also expect that a registered adult is contactable and in a position to support students if needed between 8pm and 8am. Specifically, we ask that your phone is on, and activated such that you will hear it ring.

**Please note** that College students over 18 cannot be left in charge of the house if there are other College students present who are under 18.

## 4.4.3 Students Going Out in the Evening

This section contains information about how homestay hosts should manage situations where students go out at night. It sets out both yours and the student's obligations. This information will be included in the Handbook given to students in advance of the new academic year and we will stress the importance of these rules during our induction period.

### 4.4.3.1 Preparing to Go Out at Night

During our induction period we will stress the following things to all students, regardless of their age. We ask that you talk about this section of the Handbook with your students soon after they arrive.

**Please stress the following points:**

- Students must carry their house key and keep in reserve sufficient money to catch a taxi home from anywhere in the city (e.g. £20).
- Students must ensure they have a mobile phone and that this is well charged and on so that they will hear it. They should also ensure it can operate on a UK network.
- Students must give their mobile number to their hosts.
- Students must tell homestay hosts their plans for going out and hosts have a responsibility to ensure that they do so.
- Students must give hosts details of any friends they are going out with and, where appropriate, their contact numbers.
- Students must carry written details of the host's address and contact numbers.
- Students must also put this information into their mobile phones, but not rely entirely on the electronic record.

When a student is out, we require them to tell hosts immediately if plans change. This applies even if the change is relatively minor and especially if there is a chance, they will be back after their curfew.

### 4.4.3.2 Curfews

We require that all students return to their homestay by **10.30** on weeknights, midnight at weekends, and remain there until 6am. We ask that all students, hosts, partners, and parents work with the College to ensure these rules are followed. The curfew decision is primarily motivated by the issue of safety, but also by the need for students to focus on study and for hosts and families who may have an early start to their working day.

#### **Are hosts permitted to agree an earlier curfew time with students?**

Yes. If you wish to set an earlier curfew you are free to do this. However, please discuss this with your student and outline your reasoning to them. We would expect any discussion to be based on lifestyle matters such as early rising or safety concerns due, for example, to the specific location of your home. If we can assist you in this discussion, please let us know.

#### **Are hosts permitted to agree a later curfew time with students?**

No. We do not believe that it is safe for a student who is under 18 to be out after these times and we do not condone this. If you or your student believe there are reasons why a student should be out after these times, please let us know with sufficient notice so that we can discuss the matter further. For example, if a student were doing a midnight walk for charity that is a properly organised event a later curfew might be acceptable. Equally, if a student needed to leave the house very early to (for example) catch a bus to the airport, they would be allowed to leave before 6am. For those students who turn 18 during the year in York, we still feel that safety considerations must be paramount. If this presents difficulties, please let us know so we can discuss it with agents.

#### **Are hosts permitted to agree a later curfew time with a student's parents?**

No. We expect parents to support our decision that midnight is late enough for any young person to be out in York. We believe that we have better knowledge of the city than they do and are best placed to make this call. We will inform all parents of this prior to the start of term. Accepting this will be a condition of their child's involvement in the homestay programme (see also Section 4.4.1).

#### **Do I need to know what time my student gets home?**

Yes. As part of your duty of care, we ask that you put measures in place to ensure that you know when your student is home. How you do this is up to you. For example, you may choose to stay up until they return, or perhaps develop a system whereby you leave lights on, doors open, or a combination of these measures. Whatever you decide, please ensure students are aware.

#### **My student is over 18, what are the rules for them?**

Once a student turns 18, we have limited authority to demand that they abide by a centrally mandated curfew time. Nonetheless, students will be briefed that we expect them to abide by the curfew times, even once they turn 18, not least because they are likely to be out with students under 18. They are required to respect the views of their host when it comes to matters of personal safety. They are also required to act as a considerate guest and respect that their host's lifestyle may affect discussions about when it is, and is not, reasonable for them to come home. We strongly advise hosts to discuss this with students and to contact us if you have any significant concerns.

#### **What do I do if my student is not home by curfew time?**

The answer to this question will depend entirely on the circumstances and so in that sense you will need to make a judgement call. However, we hope that the guidance below is useful:

As a starting point, please see **Section 2** on “Dealing with Emergencies”. Contact us immediately if any of the things listed in that section have happened; for example, if the student has been arrested or hospitalised, you need to contact us immediately, even if it is the middle of the night.

Beyond this, it is important to stress the difference between a safety issue and a disciplinary issue. We will take any breach of the curfew rule seriously. However, safety concerns are our overriding priority, especially out of hours. Therefore, if you have no immediate concerns for a student’s welfare (for example, they are already home), please do not contact us until the next working day.

Additional things to consider are as follows:

- Are you in contact with your student? If you are not and have no means of getting in contact, it is likely that we cannot contact them either. As such, the only thing any of us could do would be to call the police. It is for this reason that we stress the importance of keeping reliable lines of communication open.
- Were they to be called, the police would treat the student as a missing person. It goes without saying that this should be a last resort. Further information about this is available here: <http://missingpersons.police.uk/en-gb/resources/reporting-someone-missing>
- Contacting any of the student’s friends and/or their friend’s homestay hosts.
- Assuming you are in contact, what is the student saying? Do they know where they are? Do you believe them? Are they able to get home? Is there anyone else with them? Have they been drinking heavily and are therefore unable to think clearly? Are they hurt? Are they being threatened? Have they just missed the bus?
- If you feel threatened or unsafe due to a student’s behaviour and you feel the situation is beyond your control, call the emergency services and then call us as soon as possible.

#### **Reporting non-emergency concerns:**

Please contact the International team the next working day if any of the following things happens:

- A student returns home after curfew (even if there was a good reason),
- A student lies to you about their whereabouts etc. (or you suspect them of doing so),
- A student (especially one who is under 18) has been drinking,
- You suspect a student is using illegal drugs or other controlled substances,
- You have any other non-emergency concerns about a student’s conduct or welfare.

### **4.4.3.3 Last Buses**

The decision around curfews has been informed by the arrival time of the last bus from the centre of York to various destinations close to homestay properties.

The table below shows the times of the last buses from York Railway Station. This timetable is current as of August 2023 and is subject to change. We advise you to consult an up-to-date timetable to plan any journey. All buses are run by First York except the 13 Connexion and 843 Coastliner.

- First York Bus information is available here: <https://www.firstbus.co.uk/york>
- Coastliner information is found here: <http://www.yorkbus.co.uk/Coastliner.htm>

- Connexion information is available here: <https://www.connexionsbuses.com/timetables>

**York Bus Times valid from 17/08/2023 until further notice:**

No.	Destination From York Railway Station to	Monday to Friday		Saturday		Sunday	
		Depart	Arrive	Depart	Arrive	Depart	Arrive
1	Chapelfields	23:14	23:26	23:54	00:12	23:44	23:59
4	Acomb via Foxwood	23:18	23:46	22:57	23:27	23:03	23:30
5	Acomb Library	23:11	23:31	23:18	23:42	23:29	23:51
11	Bishopthorpe	23:18	23:42	23:18	23:42	None	None

#### 4.4.4 Relief Hosting

As outlined above, no student aged under 18 (or on specified programmes) should be left at home alone overnight. However, we recognise that it may be necessary for hosts to spend nights away from home during the academic year. If this happens, we will work with you to make alternative arrangements. **In all cases, please give the International team as much notice as possible to do this.**

There are three possible ways that relief hosting can be arranged if you are absent. In all cases, the College must be fully aware of the arrangements in advance and must have had an opportunity to contact all parties involved, including both the student and any relief hosts.

- 1. Student stays at another approved property (College arrangement)**  
We contact hosts who can provide temporary accommodation. We will pay these hosts directly and deduct payment from your next payment for the nights you are away.
- 2. Student stays at another approved property (private arrangement)**  
You make a private arrangement with a fellow York College homestay host that the student(s) will stay at their property for the nights you are away. In this case we will continue to pay you for the nights you are away rather than pay the relief host. You are free to make a private financial arrangement with them.
- 3. Relief host staying at your property**  
The College approves an additional adult who can stay at your property with the student for the nights that you are away. This process includes conducting an enhanced DBS check, which can take several weeks and must be completed (and the certificate seen) before we can approve the individual to provide relief hosting. Under these circumstances you will continue to be paid. We will not pay the individual providing the relief hosting, even if they are also a College homestay provider who hosts students at their property.

**Please note** that it is not possible with Option 3 for a relief host to take the student to their own property unless this property has been inspected by the College and all members of the household have been suitably approved.

## 4.4.5 Students Staying Away from Home

There may be occasions when a student wants to spend the night away from your property. The College's requirements are set out below:

**Please note** that any action referred to in this section that needs to be carried out by a parent requires the consent of someone with full parental responsibility (i.e. the actual parent), not a homestay host with the more limited right to act *in loco parentis* (see Section 4.4.1).

### Staying at another homestay property overnight:

Students can be permitted to stay overnight with another registered homestay provider – for example, another international student in homestay accommodation. This is usually treated as a private, casual arrangement which is not the same as relief hosting.

However, if you are involved in this type of arrangement, you should take the following actions:

- **Your student is staying elsewhere:** Email [accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk) and the relevant partner organisation (see Section 3.2). Tell us your name, the name of the student and the name of the other homestay host, including their address.
- **You are hosting someone else's student:** Email [accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk) and the relevant partner organisation (see Section 3.2). Tell us your name, the name of the student and the name of the other homestay host, including their address.

We do not expect significant notice of this type of arrangement. An email on the day of the stay is acceptable. Also, payments shall be maintained as if the student stayed at the original property.

### Staying with a non-homestay household:

Students can be permitted to stay in another local household under certain circumstances – for example, with a local British student. However, if the household has not been approved (including DBS checked) by the College, the following action is required:

- The student's parents (or legal guardian) **MUST** email [accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk), their relevant partner organisation, and their homestay host giving consent for the student to stay elsewhere. The email **MUST** include the name, address, and telephone number of the person with whom the student is staying. This applies even in the case of those hosting Barnes students. If a student is over 18, they may provide the email rather than their parent.

As a host, you are not directly responsible for ensuring that a student abides by these requirements. However, we ask that you are aware of their obligations and that you inform us if your student stays away from home without meeting the obligation outlined above. For information, we ask that students provide at **least 3 working days' notice** of such trips. If, as the homestay host, you become aware that a student is planning to stay away from your home, please ensure they are made aware they have a responsibility to inform us, and that this should come from their parents in cases where the student is under 18.

### Students travelling away from homestay independently:

Students wishing to travel away from the homestay independently must obtain written permission

from their parents or legal guardian before the College will approve the request. This should be emailed to [accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk), their partner organisation, and to their host. They should also provide a summary of their plans, including the means to contact them during their time away. Examples of this type of activity include a weekend away with friends or spending time with parents. Please note, we prefer them to stay in accommodation where other adults are on site, i.e. a hotel is preferable to an Airbnb style rental.

As above, we ask that students give us a **minimum of 3 working days' notice** of any trip away and ask that hosts support us in encouraging them to do so. Travelling **MUST NOT** impact on the student's contractual programme agreement. When necessary, the College and programme coordinator(s) reserve the right to decline requests for student's to travel independently.

#### **Taking students away as a family:**

If you wish to take a student away overnight (e.g. for a family weekend away) you may do so. However, they should still have their own room in the booked accommodation. They must also agree to go with you and have their parent or guardian's permission if they are under 18. The student must email a confirmation of their and their parent's consent to the College. You should also email the College in advance with details of your intended plans and be satisfied that the accommodation is up-to standard. You should not ask students for payment for this type of trip.

#### **Students travelling away from homestay as part of their study programme:**

Many study programmes have a built-in residential element. For example, in the past the Heltberg students have travelled to Scotland during October half term. These trips will not affect your payment arrangements and you do not need to take any action relating to them.

The College or partner organisations will inform you of when students are expected to be away from home. You should note that some students do not take part in these trips, and you should still be available to host if needed.

## 4.5 Communication with the College

### 4.5.1 Things You Must Tell Us About

We ask that you tell us immediately and in writing if any of the following things occur:

- Any new people (children or adults) move into your property,
- Anyone who has previously been DBS checked is charged with a new criminal offence,
- Your student tells you that they are either moving or returning home,
- You plan any major building work (e.g. kitchen refurbishment, extension etc.),
- You plan to spend time away from your property and require relief hosting,
- You put your house on the market and/or plan to move house,
- You change your email address or telephone number.

In addition, we ask that you tell us if there are any other changes in your circumstances that will have a significant impact on your ability to host students.

### 4.5.2 Discussions about Students



There may be occasions when you wish to talk to us about your student. Such conversations can be very important. However, please bear in mind that there may be a limit to what we are able to discuss with you, without involving the student directly.

Equally, please avoid discussions of sensitive and highly personal matters with your family and friends. It may sometimes be necessary for us to inform you of something about a student for you to fulfil your role as a homestay provider. However, this should not be shared more widely.

### 4.5.3 Email

Most of our written communication is done by email, so it is a requirement that hosts have an email address that they check regularly. As a minimum, **we ask that you check your inbox at least once a week**, but should do so more often at busy times, such as before and after the start of the year.

Please note that if you use a work email address you may find that there are restrictions for its use; for example, you may not be able to access your work email if you are offsite. If you feel this is too restrictive, you should consider setting up an alternative email account.

### 4.5.4 Social Media and the Internet

All hosts are required to provide students with reasonable access to the internet. We advise that you discuss what reasonable access means for you with your student. You should also make them aware that they must act within the law. You may decide to implement controls such as download limits or other filters. You should also discuss with them the responsible use of social media in your home and act responsibly yourselves in relation to this. If you have any questions about this, please contact us.

## 5 Working with Your Student

This section is all about the day-to-day interactions. The advice is based largely on feedback from hosts and students from previous years about their experience when living together.

### 5.1 Communication

Good communication is the most important part of a happy homestay relationship. Talking to your student and showing an interest in their life is the best way of building a positive relationship. If you have a positive relationship, then it will become much easier to discuss any issues.

Many of our students are under 18, and all of them, including those over 18, are still developing mentally, physically, and emotionally. This is also likely to be their first time living away from home. It is not unusual for students to want to spend a lot of time on their own in their room, especially to begin with. They might not be as communicative as you initially expect. In these cases, you should try to be patient, and continue to make efforts to engage in conversation and include them in day-to-day activities. You may want to insist that the student joins you for mealtimes for instance, as this can be a good opportunity for you both to talk about how your days have been.

### 5.2 Initial Contact

We expect that all hosts and students make contact before the start of term. As part of the placement process, we will tell you when it is okay to contact your student. Equally, we will tell the students when they can contact you. How you do this is down to you, but the objective is to set the



student's mind at ease and make them feel more comfortable about travelling a long way from home to live with people they have never met before.

## 5.3 Arrivals Day

Most of our students arrive on the same day each year. We ask that all hosts travel to the College to collect them and welcome them to York. At peak times there may be a large group of students arriving at any one time and so it can be very busy. To make life easier, we ask that all hosts make a sign (as big as you like) with your student's name on it. This makes it easier for them to spot you in a crowd of strangers. More details of how the arrivals day works is given in advance.

## 5.4 House Rules

We understand the need to offer hosts flexibility in setting their own house rules and, provided these rules meet the standards set out in this document, we actively encourage you to do so. In our experience, students will tend to feel more comfortable if they know what is expected of them from the outset. As such we recommend that you talk to your student about house rules during the first few days of your students arriving.

This will set expectations of what a student is and is not allowed to do. The College recognises that each student and host family are different and so the creation and implementation of these rules is entirely up to you. That said, we ask that you do so sensitively, openly and in partnership with your student, reaching a compromise if necessary.

## 5.5 Home Sickness

Coming a long way to live in a foreign country with a "strange" group of people can be very daunting. For a large number of students this results in some form of homesickness. Please support your student with this. In the past, hosts have found it helpful to encourage students to take part in our international social programme or other social activities.

Beyond this, encouraging students to personalise their bedrooms, talking about home or cooking familiar meals are things that can help. However, solutions will depend on individual students and can take time.

## 5.6 Cultural Differences

When hosting an international student, it is very likely that you will experience cultural differences. Learning about these differences is what makes hosting so interesting. Students come to the UK to learn about British culture, and it's also a great chance for hosts to learn about other cultures too.

You can never take anything for granted when it comes to culture. The cultures of the world are incredibly diverse and differ in very fundamental ways. Even things that are regarded as obvious or common-sense in the UK, might be completely unfamiliar to some international students. For example, some students may not know how to use a western-style sit-down toilet, because squat toilets are the norm in many countries. In some cultures, it is considered entirely normal to take multiple showers in the same day. This might be considered excessive in some UK households, but in some cultures, it would be seen as very unhygienic to wash less than this.

Some students may also be reluctant to allow their hosts to wash certain items of their clothing, such as underwear, for reasons of modesty. What is considered polite and impolite can also vary

from country to country. In the UK it is considered improper to loudly 'slurp' food, but in some countries, it is entirely normal, or even seen as a display of approval. Some languages have no equivalent of 'please' or 'thank you'. In some countries, people drink alcohol from a relatively young age, whereas in other countries alcohol might be entirely illegal and a student might feel uncomfortable with it being in the house. The list goes on!

Some of these cultural differences might seem strange or unusual, and our students are here to learn and adapt to British customs, but it is very important that you treat these differences with respect and do not mock them. If your student does something that you think rude or impolite, then you should explain in a reasonable way the behaviour that would normally be expected in your home. Sometimes this will be enough for the student to see the situation differently. In other situations, the student may not be comfortable with changing their behaviour. The important thing is that you talk to your student about these things so that you both reach a happy compromise.

While you should appreciate and respect the cultural backgrounds of our students, it is also very important not to stereotype them. Take care not to anticipate what your next student will be like based on your previous hosting experiences, because they will most likely be completely different. No two people are the same. All students are individuals and should be treated individually.

### 5.6.1 Friends Staying Overnight

Most students make lots of friends whilst they are in York. This can include girlfriends and boyfriends. Your student may want their friends or partner to spend the night at your house. The College's rules for students wishing to stay at other people's houses are explained in **Section 4.4.5**. However, these rules do not extend as far as to specify the circumstances under which a student may wish to have a friend to stay or the nature of their relationship.

Students from Akademiet and the Barnes group are here on a "no sex" programme. This is both out of respect for host families and to avoid pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases. It is a good idea to think about whom you would allow to stay, and for you to talk about this with your student.

For example, would you allow a student to have more than one friend sleep over? If so, for how many nights? Regardless of the rules you decide to put in place, the College expects you to be respectful of all sexual orientations and to treat people in a sensitive way.

Beyond this, you should be aware that the College gives general advice on sexual health to all students as part of the international welcome in September and has a range of professionals available for students to talk to throughout the year. If you have any concerns that a student is putting themselves in danger because of their lifestyle (whether related to sexual conduct or otherwise) you should not be afraid to inform their partner organisation or the College. This is covered in more detail in **Section 8** which addresses general safeguarding issues.

### 5.6.2 Laundry

Many homestay providers will do the students' laundry, but some students like to do their own. This is particularly true when it comes to washing underwear. A sense of empathy is crucial on this issue, and it is something that should be discussed with the student. You should consider what rules you would like to put in place about access to washing facilities and whether you will allow your student to do their own laundry. If you allow a student to do their own laundry you should consider how many loads of washing you will permit them to do per week, etc.

## 5.7 Food

Mealtimes can be a great opportunity to get to know your student. Food and culture are also very strongly linked, so the food you serve is a big part of an international student's experience. Please be aware that people from different parts of the world may be used to different foods as a staple part of their diet. If their staple diet changes drastically they may realise that they are intolerant to some of our regional foods and could suffer because of this. Please discuss diet with your student. The requirements for food you need to provide are outlined in **Section 4.2.5**. This section gives you advice about how to handle other situations that can arise due to food.

### 5.7.1 Diets

The College gathers information about students' dietary preferences before they arrive in York, and this is one of the criteria we use to allocate students to hosts. Students can have dietary restrictions due to religious, medical, or other lifestyle reasons.

As with all information that we gather from students before their arrival, we only know what they choose to tell us at that time. It is possible that the information they offer is incomplete, or that it may change following their arrival. In such cases, there is a need for us to work together and for you to discuss the arrangements with the student so that we can find a manageable solution. Please note that the rate that the College pays for catered homestay is the same for all homestay providers. There is no additional supplement for providing different types of food.

### 5.7.2 Fussy Eaters

Sometimes students will not like the food that you are providing for them. Some students may feel they just "don't like British food at all". In many cultures it is considered very rude to criticise the food that you are offered, so a student might not tell you if they do not like the food. Feel free to ask them if they are enjoying it. If you suspect that your student is not enjoying the food, you might want to ask them for suggestions of what they would like to eat and try to accommodate those where appropriate to reach an agreeable compromise.

If they are homesick and miss the food of their home country you might want to have a weekly or monthly international food evening, where you and your student can cook a meal together that is like what they would cook at home. This can be a great opportunity to learn about international cuisine. There are several specialty international supermarkets in York, but a lot of niche items can be found in the world foods aisle of your local large supermarket.

## 5.8 Illness

Students will become ill during their time in York. To ensure that they are properly cared for in such circumstances we ask that all students register at a local GP surgery. We ask that you support them in doing this. If a student becomes ill and is absent from the College, they must report their absence at: <https://studentadvantage.yorkcollege.ac.uk> as soon as possible on the day of their absence.

They will be given information about how to do this in their Welcome Pack and Student Homestay Handbook, but you will also find those details on **Page 27** of this Host Handbook. If they are absent for more than 3 days, they will require a doctor's note.

As with our UK students, we are experiencing more mental health issues. If you think that your student is struggling with anything at all, please contact us. The College (and their partner organisation) will support the students where we can, and they will be signposted to places where they can get further help. Each case is dealt with individually and ultimately students may have to return home if they require support that we are unable to give.

Unfortunately, access to UK NHS mental health services is very limited and subject to long waiting lists. It is for this reason that all students are asked to declare any pre-existing conditions and to ensure that they have continuing on-line support in place with medical professionals in their home country if such support is required.

## 5.9 Parental Contact

In addition to the comments above relating to parental responsibility and duty of care (see **Section 4.4.1**) developing a relationship with the students' parents is a positive thing and, in most situations, we actively encourage you to do so. This is particularly true when students are under 18 as their parents have a direct role in supporting them. For example, emailing to confirm that a student may stay away overnight (see **Section 4.4.5**).

In addition, a student's parents are much more able to tell you what a student is really like. You can also, for example, ask them about lifestyle issues, house rules, etc. However, please be sensitive to the fact that some parents may not speak English or have very limited English. Your student will be best placed to advise you about this.

In other circumstances, for example, where you have specific problems or concerns that you are unable to resolve with your student directly, especially in cases of ill-discipline or sensitive matters, we advise that you speak to the College or partner organisations, before you contact the parents.

## 6 The College's Role

This section outlines some aspects of the College's role in organising homestay accommodation and supporting international students.

### 6.1 Placing Students

Our placement process is designed to match hosts and students based on their lifestyles and what both parties are looking for from a homestay relationship. All students want something slightly different from their time in York. Some are looking for a home-away-from-home, a second family where they can be included in all aspects of family life. Others are simply looking for somewhere to sleep and eat. Everyone is unique in this respect, so gathering as much information as possible about peoples' preferences and lifestyles is vitally important to our allocation process.

#### **When do we match students and hosts?**

This process happens over several weeks. It usually begins in May and extends until shortly before the arrival day. However, by the middle of June we aim to be able to tell most hosts whether we have placed a student with them. We will do this by sending an email to hosts which contains a profile of the student(s). Hosts will then have time to ask questions about the student and confirm that they are happy to host. This usually takes a further two weeks. After this, we send the hosts' details to the student(s) and encourage each party to contact each other directly. Typically, hosts and students are put in touch with each other in early July.

- **Please note** timelines above are a guide and it is invariably the case that some students come on board later in the summer. However, we try to place most students all at once.

### How do you match students and hosts?

To match, we look at the preferences of both students and hosts and try to find the best fit. We start with students who have allergies or dietary needs and match them first. This is due to the limited number of hosts who can support. Thereafter, we match other students based on their needs and preferences. We also look at whether a student wants to live with other students or whether they wish to be the only student in the household.

### My student doesn't seem like a very good fit. Why is that?

We always try to find the best possible match between students and hosts, based on information given to us. Our job is to find an acceptable match for all students, rather than the best match for any given student. This means that there will at times be compromises where we need to prioritise certain preferences above others. For example, we need to make sure we can cater for allergies, medical needs, and dietary requirements, before we look at whether a student wants to live with children or pets. Equally, we may very well consider pets before we look at whether a host and student share the same interest in sport or music. Occasionally we will make a mistake, and this is partly why we tell hosts about the allocations before we tell students. At this stage, we want you to raise concerns that you believe are significant, even if we cannot always act on them.

### Why don't I have a student this year? / Why do I not have as many students as usual?

We are never able to guarantee placing students with a given household, nor how many students we will place. The number of students coming to the College changes each year and our main priority is always how well the preferences match, and how a student's needs can be catered for.

Where we have more than one host whom we feel is suitable for a student, we do consider factors such as how many students that host has already been allocated and we do our best to ensure an even distribution of students. However, this is a secondary priority and not the first thing we consider. We appreciate that this level of uncertainty is not for everyone, but it is the nature of the hosting experience. By hosting you are agreeing to accept that we cannot make any guarantees.

## 6.2 Managing Student Moves

Although most students are happy with their homestay arrangements, it is sometimes the case that students ask to move to a new household. Consider the following points in relation to this:

- Students who wish to move often try to make their own private arrangements via friends, or by contacting hosts directly. This invariably makes an already difficult situation much more complicated. It is crucial that we work together to avoid this. If you are contacted by a student, or their friend, **you must not make any promises or agree to anything**. You should contact the International team at the next available opportunity, and we will investigate.
- The College will make the final decision about whether to proceed with a move once all the information has been considered.
- In general, we view a move as a last resort, but also recognise the need to ensure that students are not placed in a position they find untenable. The same is true for hosts.

- The reasons for a student requesting a move are often difficult to establish, sometimes impossible. Therefore, it may not always be possible to give hosts an answer for the move.

Finally, we recognise that requests to move can be distressing for both students and hosts. We have limited resources, but we will do our best to make the move process as easy as possible for all.

## 6.3 Academic Monitoring

Homestay providers are not responsible for a student's academic progress. We believe that encouraging students to take responsibility for their own studies is an important part of their time in the UK. Each student has a personal tutor (Progress Coach) who meets with them on a weekly basis to discuss their work and address any other issues the student may have.

Showing an interest in what your student is doing at College is a great way of developing your relationship. However, it is not your role to chase them or to put direct pressure on them to study. Equally, it is the student's responsibility to inform the College of any absences.

Students must report absences via: <https://studentadvantage.yorkcollege.ac.uk> as soon as possible on the day of their absence.

## 6.4 Managing Ill-Discipline

Most students have a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards their time in the UK. However, we are aware that poor behaviour can occasionally become an issue. The College is responsible for addressing this and supporting you as hosts. We will work with you if you have any concerns.

All students are subject to the College's disciplinary policy. This applies to behaviour outside of College as well as behaviour within the building. This is available to view/download here: <https://www.yorkcollege.ac.uk/about/governance-and-reports/policies-and-procedures>

## 6.5 Student Visas

Students who are in the country on a student visa require the College to formally "sponsor" their applications. This means that we have certain obligations placed upon us by the government. It is the job of the International team to manage this complex and specialised area. Hosts should not try to advise students on visa matters and instead direct them to the College's International team.

Likewise, if a student is having visa issues, or has lost important documentation (e.g. their passport), please check with the International team to ensure that we are aware of it. Students sometimes try to deal with this type of problem on their own and often lack the knowledge to do so. This can have serious implications for their continued right to stay in the country or future right to enter the UK.

## 6.6 Students with Additional Needs

Prior to their arrival, we are asking all students to complete a comprehensive self-assessment detailing their personal support needs. This is designed to highlight any academic or learning support needs (for example whether they have dyslexia). It also asks a range of questions about their background. Occasionally, these will be relevant to you as homestay hosts. Where necessary we will be in contact with individual hosts as part of the placement process to discuss these support needs.

Beyond this, it is possible that students are not completely open about their circumstances, or that their needs change during their time in York. Both the College and hosts will need to work together to manage this type of situation on a case-by-case basis.

## 7 Finance, Insurance and Data Management

This section will explain how the payment process works, along with how, when, and how much you should expect to be paid for your hosting services. We also cover matters such as tax, insurance, tenancy agreements, mortgages, and data protection.

### 7.1 Payment Process

In return for hosting, the College will pay a fee in accordance with the below information:

#### How will the money be paid to hosts?

The College will pay hosts every month via a BACS payment directly into their nominated bank account. New hosts will be asked to provide bank details when they register. If you change your bank details, it is your responsibility to let the International team know, who will send a BACS details alteration form. This can be returned to the College by email or returned via the College reception. At no point should any money change hands directly between hosts and students.

#### What is the rate of pay?

Payment is calculated per night, i.e., each night a student stays in the property. Some students stay longer and as such, total payment amounts for the year will vary from host to host.

- Current homestay rate for 2023/24 is **£25.00 per night** (£175 per week).

In cases where a student returns home during the Christmas or Easter break, hosts will receive a £50 luggage storage fee for the holiday period. In return they will allow the students to store their belongings in the home. However, they are not obliged to permit a student to store luggage in their room. This is a personal choice. **Typically, students retain residency during all half term periods.**

If a student chooses to stay away from your property overnight for an occasional night or weekend away, the College will continue to pay you. Equally, we will continue to pay for any students who are away from their homestay on residential trips as part of their study programme - for example, Akademiet trips to London or Edinburgh. Therefore, if a student chooses not to attend such a trip, you should still support them in your home.

Due to the structure of their programme, we pay for Akademiet students during the Easter break even though many choose to travel home during this time. Therefore, they have a right to stay with you if they wish to. If they are travelling home, they should abide by the requirements for informing us of their intentions (see **section 4.4.5**). We do not automatically pay for students on other programmes during Easter. We only expect to pay for those nights specified in the programme dates for the year (see [Appendix C](#)). If there are any other dates when students request to stay in homestay this must be agreed by all parties in advance.

#### When will the money be paid?

From the end of September, the College will typically transfer money to each host's nominated bank



account monthly in arrears. For example, you will be paid for any hosting you do between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October on, or shortly after, 31<sup>st</sup> October (see payment schedule below).

This approach ensures, amongst other things, that we do not have to request repayments from hosts should a student move homestay in the middle of a month. As an exception to this arrangement, we recognise that at the start of the year, payment in arrears can result in hosts being out of pocket. To avoid this, the College will pay for the first two weeks of September in advance. The remainder of September's payment will be paid at the end of the month.

### **How will I know what money to expect?**

In advance of each payment, hosts will receive an email detailing the amount of money to be paid and we will reconfirm the expected date by which this money will leave the College bank account. Please allow **3 working days** from this point for the money to reach your bank account. Full details of the anticipated payment schedule for 2023/24 are given in **Section 7.2**.

### **What if a student moves mid-month?**

We will confirm any decision to move a student in writing via email. From this point the College will pay you a minimum of an additional 7 nights' hosting fee. This does not mean that the student will necessarily move immediately as it can take a few days for the College to arrange alternative accommodation. However, it does mean that you are guaranteed the income regardless of the actual move date.

If a student stays beyond the 7<sup>th</sup> night following notice to move, you will be paid for any additional nights up to the final night that the student sleeps at your property. The final payment for this student will be paid in accordance with the main payment schedule detailed above.

### **What if a student wants to live with me after the end of their programme?**

For the 2023/24 year, the College stipulates that all students must leave their accommodation by Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2024 at the latest. (see also dates in [Appendix B](#)).

If you choose to permit a student to stay with you after their final programme end date, this will be a private arrangement between you and the student. The College is not responsible for it and will make no payment for these nights without prior written agreement.

### **My student uses too much electricity/eats all the food, can I charge them more?**

No. The cost of hosting is all-inclusive, and no additional money should ever change hands. If you have a serious concern about your circumstances, please speak to us.

### **My student has requested special food, will I get paid more for this?**

No. We do not pay a supplementary rate for students with additional dietary needs.

### **Can the College guarantee that I have a student each year as I rely on the income?**

No. Unfortunately, we are not able to do this. The nature of the arrangement is a flexible one. We commit to 7 days' payment from the date on which the College confirms that the student is moving or on which the student moves (whichever is earlier), but no more than this. We strongly advise that hosts do not rely on homestay as a source of income.



## 7.2 Payment Schedule

Payment Reference	Start of period	End of Period	Processing Date
2023-24-A	04/09/2023	16/09/2023	01/09/2023
2023-24-B	17/09/2023	30/09/2023	30/09/2023
2023-24-C	01/10/2023	31/10/2023	31/10/2023
2023-24-D	01/11/2023	30/11/2023	30/11/2023
2023-24-E	01/12/2023	10/12/2023	12/12/2023
2023-24-F	11/12/2022	31/12/2023	10/01/2024
2023-24-G	01/01/2024	31/01/2024	31/01/2024
2023-24-H	01/02/2024	28/02/2024	28/02/2024
2023-24-I	01/03/2024	31/03/2024	31/03/2024
2023-24-J	01/04/2024	30/04/2024	30/04/2024
2023-24-K	01/05/2024	31/05/2024	31/05/2024
2023-24-L	01/06/2024	07/07/2024	30/06/2024

For 2023/24 the processing date is usually the last day of the payment period. This is the date by which the money will leave the College's bank account. Where this falls on a weekend, it will be the next working day. Please allow 3 working days from this point for the money to reach your account.

For us to achieve this processing date, there is a chance that hosts who receive new students (due to unplanned moves) in the final week of the payment period will not get paid for these students until the week after the main payment run. We will inform you in advance if this is the case and ensure that payment is made as soon as possible thereafter. We will not wait for the next payment run to make this type of adjustment.

As explained above, payment for the first 2 weeks of September is paid in advance to ensure that hosts are not out of pocket at the start of term. You can expect this payment to arrive in your bank account the week preceding the students' arrival.

The other exception to the monthly payment rule is that December is split so that you receive a proportion before Christmas and the remainder (including the first week of January) after Christmas.

Finally, this payment schedule is subject to change, although changes are not anticipated. We will inform you in advance if there are any adjustments.

## 7.3 Payment Errors

If you believe that the amount paid to you is incorrect, please let the International team know as soon as possible. If there has been an overpayment the College will write to you, requesting a repayment of the additional money within 28 days of notification. Any underpayments will be paid to you as soon as possible and no later than the next scheduled payment run.

## 7.4 Tax

Payments from hosting a student count as rental income, and **hosts are therefore responsible for ensuring that they declare this income** to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). The College will not declare this income for you (i.e., it is not taxed on a PAYE basis). The College is not in any way responsible for prosecutions that are a result of failing to pay the correct amount of tax.

**Please note** the income you gain from hosting students may also affect your eligibility for certain state benefits and tax credits. This should be checked before submitting your application to host.

Homestay providers may be eligible for tax-free income of up to £7,500 under the government's Rent a Room scheme. More information can be found on the government's website, or by consulting an accountant. The College is not able to provide advice about this or other tax related matters.

<https://www.gov.uk/rent-room-in-your-home/rent-bills-and-tax>

Full-time students and people under 18 are both exempt from paying council tax, but having a student resident in the property may affect the amount of council tax you need to pay if you are otherwise in receipt of a single occupancy discount. Queries about this should be directed towards the City of York Council's council tax team.

[https://www.york.gov.uk/info/20021/council\\_tax\\_discounts/17/single\\_occupancy\\_discount\\_for\\_council\\_tax](https://www.york.gov.uk/info/20021/council_tax_discounts/17/single_occupancy_discount_for_council_tax)

## 7.5 Insurance and Damage

The College is not responsible for any damage and regular wear-and-tear that may occur due to the hosting of students. You should make sure that your home contents and building insurance covers damage caused by a paying tenant. However, your policy does not need to cover the student's own belongings. The students should take out a separate policy to cover this.

**Please note**, if you have not declared that you are operating as a homestay, your home insurer could refuse to pay a claim should one occur. Further information about home insurance is available from the Association of British Insurers:

<https://www.abi.org.uk/products-and-issues/choosing-the-right-insurance/home-insurance/>

## 7.6 Home Ownership and Tenancy Rights

If you rent your home, it is important that you check your tenancy agreement to establish whether you have the right to host a paying guest. If unclear, we ask that you agree this with your landlord.

If you own your home, but have a mortgage, it will usually be ok to host a paying guest. However, we advise you check the T&Cs of your mortgage to ensure there is no reason why this is not possible.

**Hosts take full responsibility for checking both scenarios above.** The College will assume you have established your right to host before agreeing to accept a student.

## 7.7 Data Management

The College has a duty to keep evidence demonstrating that we are complying with all relevant rules and regulations for student accommodation and student visas. This includes information about

where they are living and the nature of that property. We also have a practical need to share information about you with our partners and students. This need is in part due to our collective duty of care and not sharing certain information could jeopardise this. Finally, we have a duty to make this information available to those with a legal right to demand it. This includes our auditors and certain regulatory bodies such as OFSTED or the Home Office. However, this information is never shared for marketing purposes.

You will note that the annual preferences form explains that this information will be shared with students and partners. We also keep records of all this information, our visit reports, and other correspondence with you electronically. This information is available for you to view should you wish to do so. The approach outlined above is managed in line with the Data Protection Act 1998, with which the College has a legal obligation to comply.

## 8 Safeguarding

Action taken to protect young people from harm is called “safeguarding”. The following abridged definition is taken from the Department for Education’s guidance document, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, published in 2016:

"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children...This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child... If children... are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. Children includes everyone under the age of 18".

York College is required to extend its duties to the protection of vulnerable adult students (aged 18+) from abuse, maltreatment, or harm. Procedures differ slightly and often require explicit consent from the student, so always seek advice from the College if you are unsure. Safeguarding is an overarching concept that is at the heart of all government and College requirements for homestay accommodation. The College’s safeguarding policy can be found on our website:

<https://www.yorkcollege.ac.uk/about/your-student-experience/student-support/safeguarding>

### 8.1 Reporting Concerns

We use the term “safeguarding disclosure” whenever a young person tells someone about a safeguarding issue. If a student begins to talk to you in a way that makes you think they are about to make a disclosure, the first thing you **MUST** do is to tell them that you **CANNOT** guarantee to keep the conversation confidential, as you may have a legal and moral duty to pass the information on.

**Other things to bear in mind are:**

- **NEVER** promise that they can talk to you confidentially. It is your responsibility to explain that you may need to pass information on to someone else in order to keep them safe,

- **NEVER** promise that you can solve the issue at hand,
- **ALWAYS** take them seriously and reassure them you will do what you can to help,
- **ALWAYS** ask open questions to better understand the concern,
- **ALWAYS** ask the student to establish the facts as they see them (who, what, where, when),
- **ALWAYS** take notes and keep them safe and secure; you may need to refer to them later,
- **ALWAYS** ensure your notes are written in exactly the way the student described the issue,
- **ALWAYS** make sure to explain that you are not an expert and do not have all the answers.

In addition, you should assess whether there is any immediate danger to the student; for example, if they need emergency medical care, dial **999** as a priority.

Likewise, if the student is at both an **IMMEDIATE** and **SERIOUS** risk of harm or abuse, then an emergency call should be made to **Children's Social Care on 01904 551900** (01609 780780 out of hours) and the police. For students over 18, call **Adult Social Care on 01904 555111** (01609 534527 out of hours) and, if relevant, the police.

Following this type of conversation, you should **ALWAYS** report your concerns to the International team on **01904 770 490 / 486**. Alternatively, you can call the **College's main number 01904 770100** and ask for the Safeguarding Officer or a Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP).

Alternatively, if you are unable to contact the College, or are uncomfortable doing so, you may choose to **contact the student's partner organisation** listed in **Section 3.2**. If this is not possible for any reason or you judge it is inappropriate, you should contact the City of York Children's Social Care via the *Children's Front Door* service on 01904 551900. For those who are over 18 call 01904 555111.

**Further information is available here:**

- <https://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/>
- <https://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/>

## 8.2 Protecting Yourself

While false accusations are rare, it is important that all adults working with young people do not put themselves at unnecessary risk and that they protect themselves from misunderstandings that can and do unfortunately occur. The list below outlines things you should (and should not) do:

- **DO** treat everyone with dignity and respect – do not show favouritism,
- **DO** respect a young person's right to personal privacy,
- **DO** allow young people to talk about any concerns they may have,
- **DO** encourage others to challenge attitudes or behaviours they do not like,
- **DO** avoid being drawn into attention-seeking behaviour, e.g. tantrums and crushes,
- **DO** make everyone in your household aware of our safeguarding arrangements,
- **DO** remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, even if you mean well,
- **DO NOT** trivialise abuse,
- **DO NOT** take part in physical contact games with young people,
- **DO NOT** make suggestive remarks or threats to a young person,
- **DO NOT** use inappropriate language when writing, phoning, emailing, or using the internet,
- **DO NOT** let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported,
- **DO NOT** rely on your good name to protect you.

**What if someone makes an allegation against me?**

If this happens, the College is duty-bound to treat the allegation seriously and to eliminate any immediate risk. Therefore, regardless of whether we think the allegation is true we will typically act to remove the student(s) from your household immediately. This does not mean we believe you are guilty of the allegation, nor that the student or students will be removed permanently. Such circumstances are extremely rare but do happen. Thereafter, things will be managed on a case-by-case basis. Throughout the process, we will be as open and clear as we are permitted to be.

**What if I feel threatened by my student's behaviour or suspect they are a threat to others?**

If you feel that your student is a threat to you, members of your household, or to others, you **MUST** **tell us immediately**. We will deal with this type of disclosure every bit as seriously as we would disclosures by students. As above, and subject to your wishes, we would look to move the student immediately under these circumstances and take any other necessary action to prevent harm.

## 8.3 Level 1 - Safeguarding Children Awareness E-Learning

The City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership offer an online virtual **City of York Safeguarding Children Awareness E-learning** course with a certificate of completion. We believe that this is a useful introduction to safeguarding and will be of value to hosts. Moreover, the newly revised National Minimum Standards now require that all adults providing homestay accommodation to students complete the training. We expect that **every adult member** of an approved homestay household does the training and send us a copy of the certificate.

There is a cost associated with the training (approx. £15 per person). Once you have completed the training, please send us the receipt of the payment, and the College will reimburse you.

In line with wider York College policy and best practice, the training needs to be renewed **every four years**. As with DBS check renewals, we will contact each host shortly before their certificate's expiry date as a reminder to re-do the training.

- Training is done via the CYSCP e-learning platform: <https://cyscp-training.york.gov.uk/login/>
- Click 'Create new account' and complete the form to start the registration process, in which you will be asked to provide a name and email address. You will be sent your log in details once one of City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership (CYSCP) has authorised your registration. Please allow 2 working days for this to be completed.
- You will be given further information to read and will complete a short questionnaire.

Once you have passed the course, you will be able to access a certificate which indicates you have completed the course. Please email your certificate to [accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk)

If you encounter any problems with the training, please contact the Workforce Development Unit (01904 553017) or email [cyscp@york.gov.uk](mailto:cyscp@york.gov.uk)

**Please note** if you have completed safeguarding training at your workplace recently, you can send a copy of that certificate to [accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@yorkcollege.ac.uk) instead.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook.**

**If you have any questions, please email the International team at [international@yorkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:international@yorkcollege.ac.uk) or call 01904 770 490 / 486**

# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A:

## Homestay Host Checklist

Topic	Section
<b>Smoke Alarms:</b> At least one smoke alarm must be installed on every floor of your property.	<b>4.1.4</b>
<b>Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms:</b> One must be installed in the same room as your gas boiler, plus in any room with a solid fuel appliance (e.g. wood burning stove). We advise installation in any room with any gas appliance.	<b>4.1.5</b>
<b>Gas Safety Check:</b> This must be done annually. This is your responsibility. We expect that the new check is arranged no later than two weeks prior to the expiry of the original certificate. We reserve the right to move students if this does not occur.	<b>4.1.2</b>
<b>Fire Risk Assessment:</b> All new hosts must complete our fire risk assessment form annually. This is to check for any major changes to the property and should be discussed with all students.	<b>4.1.4</b>
<b>Safeguarding Certificates:</b> A requirement for all adult household members. This training must be repeated every 4 years.	<b>8.3</b>
<b>DBS checks:</b> All resident adults require a DBS check before we can place students. This includes any adult expected to be resident for more than 30 days per year. Fee paying lodgers and international students over 18 are excluded from DBS checks, but we must be informed of any new residents immediately, regardless of their status. Checks will be repeated every 4 years.	<b>4.1.1</b>
<b>Tax:</b> It is your responsibility to declare the income you receive for hosting a student. The government's Rent a Room scheme allows you to earn £7500 per tax year from paying guests without paying tax. However, this is subject to change.	<b>7.4</b>
<b>Insurance:</b> It is your responsibility to check that your buildings and contents insurance covers you for damage caused by paying guests. The College does not cover this. You are not expected to cover the student's possessions.	<b>7.5</b>

<b>Rented Properties:</b> If you rent your home, it is your responsibility to check your tenancy agreement permits you to host students.	<b>7.6</b>
<b>Duty of Care:</b> As a homestay host you have a duty of care and are entitled to take reasonable actions to ensure the student's safety and wellbeing. Hosts do not have formal parental responsibility but can obtain the delegated authority to act in place of a parent ( <i>in loco parentis</i> ). Read the relevant section for more details.	<b>4.4</b> <b>Appendix E</b>
<b>Relief Hosting:</b> No student under 18 (or even over 18 on most of our programmes) can be left alone overnight. The section on relief hosting outlines how to manage things if you need to stay away.	<b>4.4.4</b>
<b>Curfews:</b> Any student younger than 18 is expected to return to your property by 22:30 on weeknights, midnight at weekends and remain there until 6am.	<b>4.4.3.2</b>
<b>Students Staying Away from Home:</b> As with curfews we have listed extensive guidance on what happens when a student wishes to stay away from home. Please refer to this.	<b>4.4.5</b>
<b>Emergency and Out-of-Hours Contact:</b> In an emergency always dial 999 first. Details of how and when to contact the College or our partner organisations are in Sections 2 and 3 of the handbook.	<b>2 and 3</b>
<b>Safeguarding Disclosure:</b> Information about what to do if a student talks to you about a safeguarding concern is available in the main Handbook. Please read this. Note that you should <b><u>never promise to talk to a student confidentially.</u></b>	<b>8.1</b>
<b>Things You Must Provide:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breakfast and evening meals every day</li> <li>• Lunch at the weekend and on public holidays</li> <li>• A place for students to store their own food</li> <li>• The ability to wash their clothes</li> <li>• A study bedroom, including a desk</li> <li>• A key to your house</li> <li>• Use of the internet</li> <li>• Access to all communal areas of the house</li> <li>• Your contact details (and you should have their details)</li> </ul>	<b>4.2</b>



# APPENDIX B:

## Key Dates 2023/24

Any changes to the calendar will be emailed to hosts in advance.

Term 1	
30/08/23	Host Briefing in College 18:00 to 19:00
05/09/23	International induction day at York College (arrive at 10:00) followed by York Treasure Hunt at York Minster
06/09/23	Akademiet & Rud social event with Jon Bell
07/09/23	AS-level induction day 09:00
08/09/23	Vocational induction day 09:00
30/10/23 - 03/10/23	Autumn Half term break – no classes at York College
18/12/22	Akademiet, Barnes and most other students vacate homestay
22/12/23	Final day of term

Term 2	
07/01/24	Akademiet, Barnes and most other students return to homestay
08/01/24	First teaching day of term
12/02/24 - 16/02/24	Spring Half term break – no classes at York College
22/03/24	Final teaching day of term
23/03/24	Barnes and most other students vacate homestay

Term 3	
05/04/24	Barnes and most other students return to homestay
08/04/24	First teaching day of term
06/05/24	Public holiday – no classes
27/05/24 to 31/05/24	Summer Half term break – no classes at York College
By 24/06/24	Barnes students return home and leave York for the final time
By 24/06/24	Akademiet students return to Norway and leave York for the final time

## APPENDIX C:

### Payment Schedule 2023/24

The schedule is also included in the main Handbook (Section 7.2).

Payment Reference	Start of period	End of Period	Processing Date
2023-24-A	04/09/2023	16/09/2023	01/09/2023
2023-24-B	17/09/2023	30/09/2023	30/09/2023
2023-24-C	01/10/2023	31/10/2023	31/10/2023
2023-24-D	01/11/2023	30/11/2023	30/11/2023
2023-24-E	01/12/2023	10/12/2023	12/12/2023
2023-24-F	11/12/2022	31/12/2023	10/01/2024
2023-24-G	01/01/2024	31/01/2024	31/01/2024
2023-24-H	01/02/2024	28/02/2024	28/02/2024
2023-24-I	01/03/2024	31/03/2024	31/03/2024
2023-24-K	01/04/2024	30/04/2024	30/04/2024
2023-24-J	01/05/2024	31/05/2024	31/05/2024
2023-24-L	01/06/2024	07/07/2024	30/06/2024

**Please note:** For 2023/24 the processing date is usually the last day of the payment period. This is the date by which the money will leave the College's bank account. Please allow 3 working days from this point for the money to reach your bank account.

# APPENDIX D:

## Minimum Standards Agreement (copy)

The minimum standards that York College expects of their homestay providers are set out below. These are informed by the National Minimum Standards for the residential care of young people by Further Education Colleges. Students will also be informed of what is expected of them whilst living in York College homestay accommodation.

### **As a York College homestay host I agree to:**

- Be kind, considerate and always treat students with dignity and respect,
- Be polite and sensitive to the views of students,
- Have clear and reasonable rules and make sure that expectations are understood,
- Inform York College immediately when a student intends to move/return to their home country.

### **I also agree to provide:**

- A safe, secure, comfortable, clean, and adequately heated home environment that is free of obvious health and safety hazards,
- A clean, hygienic and appropriately sized bedroom (one student per bedroom) with space to study and adequate lighting,
- A suitable bed (not a futon or camp bed, free from any damage),
- Storage space: adequate storage space for clothes, books and folders and the students, own food (even if the majority of meals are provided by the host),
- Adequate lockable bathroom facilities, including a shower (or shower over a bath),
- Regular laundering of the students' clothes, bedding and towels or facilities for the students to launder their own clothes, bedding and towels,
- Internet access and a telephone enabling students to receive and make calls (should they need to, for example if their mobile is broken) on an 'at cost' basis,
- A key for the student(s) to access the home as they require,
- Ample, healthy, nutritious, and hygienically prepared meals:
  - Breakfast and evening meal seven days a week
  - Lunch at weekends or when the student is not in college (bank holidays or training days)

### **Safeguarding checks/training**

All residents of the homestay household aged over 18 will be required to complete a DBS check. They are also required to carry out safeguarding training.

### **Fire & Gas Safety**

All homestay accommodation must comply with current law regarding the accommodation of paying guests. This includes the regular updating of gas safety certificates and fire risk assessments. This includes

a requirement for smoke detectors on each floor of the house and a carbon monoxide detector as described in the homestay handbook.

**Right to host:** By agreeing to host a student you are confirming that you have the right to do this whether you are the homeowner, or renting. In particular, any homestay provider who does not own their own home should check with their landlord before agreeing to take a student.

**Inspections:** A representative from the International Team at York College will visit your property annually. Assessments will be recorded in writing and further discussion/action taken should any issues be identified. This is also an opportunity for you to provide feedback to the College on your hosting experience.

**College Paperwork:** York College require that all homestay providers complete certain bits of paperwork annually, for example our hosting preferences form, contact details update and others. This is an important aspect of the role and will influence our ability to place students with you.

**Feedback:** Homestay provider feedback will be requested at least once an academic year and student feedback more frequently. Any specific concerns identified will be discussed with the homestay provider and the student.

**Cultural differences:** Homestay providers should be polite and sensitive to the views of others and at all times act as a considerate host. They should set clear and reasonable rules and ensure that these are understood.

**Student arrivals and departure:** We request that you come to college to meet and collect your student when they first arrive. Thereafter you should discuss directly with the student their arrangements for departing in holidays or at the end of the academic year.

**Student support:** During the students' settling in period, we request that you support them in registering with your local GP, taking public transport and ensuring they know how to get around and particularly to and from college.

---

I understand and agree to uphold the above minimum standards as a homestay provider for York College. I also agree to follow the requirements established in the College's Homestay Handbook. I understand that this document will be revised annually and re-issued to hosts in advance of each academic year.

I will inform York College if at any time the accommodation I provide does not meet the required standards. I will contact York College if I have any concerns about the welfare or behaviour of any student in my care.

Lead Host Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Resident Adult Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Resident Adult Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Resident Adult Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

# APPENDIX E:

## Parental Delegation Form

Here is an example of the words a parent could use in order to grant a homestay host the right to act in their place (*i.e. in loco parentis*).

### Words for Parents:

I, [PARENT NAME], confirm that I have parental responsibility for [STUDENT NAME]. In this capacity, I consent to delegate to [HOST NAME] the power to act in my place. I recognise that with this power they may sign documents and take other actions that would ordinarily require the consent of someone with full parental responsibility.

I understand that I still hold parental responsibly and that I delegate the power to act in my place only. I understand that I may withdraw this delegated power at any time.

This declaration is made under English Law, in accordance with the Children Act 1989.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Words for Hosts:

I, [HOST NAME] as a provider of residential accommodation for [STUDENT NAME] acknowledge that I have been granted the power to act in the place of [PARENT NAME] who has lawful parental responsibility for [STUDENT NAME]. I recognise that with this delegated authority I may sign documents and take other actions that would ordinarily require the consent of someone with parental responsibility.

I understand that whilst I have the delegated authority to act on their behalf, [PARENT NAME] retains full parental responsibly for [STUDENT NAME]. I understand that this delegated power may be withdrawn at any time and that such a withdrawal would not require my consent.

This declaration is made under English Law, in accordance with the Children Act 1989.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX F:

## Student Accommodation Agreement

Students, homestay providers and landlords must all work in partnership with the College to ensure that they take joint responsibility for supporting students, families, and others. To assist in this process, we have prepared the following guidance which we request that you read carefully. You will be asked to sign a copy on when you arrive. Your accommodation provider will also be asked to sign a copy.

### Accommodation providers agree to:

- Be respectful of their student(s) at all times and act as considerate hosts.
- Be polite and sensitive to the views of others.
- Set clear and reasonable rules and guidelines for students, ensuring that expectations are understood on both sides.
- Contact the Accommodation Office at York College if they have concerns about the welfare or behaviour of any student in their care. The College is here to help.

### They will also provide:

- A safe, secure, and comfortable environment.
- A clean, secure, and appropriately sized bedroom.
- Laundry facilities for you to maintain your own clothes.
- An area for you to complete College work in comfort and quiet.
- Internet access.
- Reasonable facility for students to store their own food, even if most of their meals are being provided for by the host.
- Where meals are provided, these shall include:
  - A good breakfast seven days a week.
  - Lunch at weekends.
  - A nutritious evening meal seven days a week.

### Students agree to:

- Be respectful of their hosts, or accommodation provider, and always act as a considerate guest.
- Be polite and sensitive to the views of others.
- Acknowledge and respect any rules and guidelines agreed with the accommodation provider.
- Contact the Accommodation Office at York College if they have any questions or concerns that they feel unable to resolve with their accommodation provider directly.
- Return to homestay accommodation by midnight at the very latest unless under very specific circumstances when there has been prior agreement with York College and your homestay host.

### They will also:

- Maintain their room and person to an acceptable level of tidiness and hygiene. It is not the host's job to clear up after the student.
- Communicate with your host about where you are, who you are with, and if plans change, tell your host about these changes promptly and clearly.
- At all times try to speak in English even in the presence of others who speak the same language.

**Note:** The host is not responsible for providing transport to College or ensuring students attend lessons.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX G:

## Social Media Policy

### 6.1 General information

Social media is the term used to describe the online tools, websites and interactive media that enable users to interact with each other in various ways, through sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. Social media involves building online communities or networks, which encourage participation, dialogue and involvement.

The College recognises the value that social media can have if used in a responsible and professional way and is committed to maintaining confidentiality and professionalism at all times.

Individuals are personally accountable for their behaviour and should ensure they do not engage in unacceptable behaviours on social media sites, as they may be held liable for any breaches of this policy.

Please note that unacceptable behaviour on a social media site relating to students, fellow hosts and college staff, may be deemed to be a breach of this Policy and therefore may result in the dismissal of the host in the event that the misbehaviour is deemed to be of a sufficiently serious nature.

### 6.2 Legislation

The College will adhere to its obligations under the legislation relevant to the use and monitoring of electronic communications, which are predominantly the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000; the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000; the Communications Act 2003; Data Protection Act 1998; the Human Rights Act 1998; the Defamation Act 1996 and the Equality Act 2010.

### 6.3 Expected standards of conduct on social media websites

#### 6.3.1 Appropriate conduct

When communicating specifically relating to students, fellow hosts, hosting for the college, or the College and its staff, hosts **must**:

- Conduct themselves in accordance with other policies, procedures and code(s) of professional conduct;
- Be professional, courteous and respectful as would be expected in any other situation;
- Be transparent and honest. The College will not tolerate hosts making false representations.
- Remove or request the removal of any inappropriate comments, images or videos of fellow hosts, students or College staff.

#### 6.3.2 Inappropriate conduct

When communicating using a designated College communication tool or within a personal capacity, hosts **must not** conduct themselves inappropriately. The following are examples of inappropriate conduct:

- Engaging in activities that have the potential to bring the College into disrepute.
- Breach of confidentiality by disclosing privileged, sensitive and/or confidential information about students, fellow hosts or the College and its staff.
- Making inappropriate comments about sensitive accommodation related matters.
- Making comments that could be considered to be bullying, harassing or discriminatory against any individual or which potentially breaches related College policies.
- Posting remarks which may (inadvertently) cause offence and constitute unlawful discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation.
- Posting or uploading inappropriate comments, images, photographs and/or video clips about fellow hosts or ex-hosts, students or ex-students, parents or College staff.
- Publishing disparaging, defamatory and/or knowingly false material about other hosts, students or the College and its staff. This includes commenting on any related matters that are not factually correct or deemed appropriate.
- Use of offensive, derogatory or intimidating language which may damage working relationships.
- Participating in any activity which may compromise your position as a host for the College.

The above examples are not exhaustive or exclusive.

Employees will be held personally liable for any material published on social media websites that is reasonably held to compromise themselves, their colleagues and/or the reputation of the College. Employees will be required to remove any postings which are deemed by the college to constitute a breach of this Policy. Failure or refusal to do so will be dealt with in accordance with the college's Disciplinary Procedure.



## APPENDIX H:

### Complaints and Compliments Procedure

This procedure is updated regularly so we have not reproduced it in this Handbook, but the most recent version can always be found on the York College website at:

<https://www.yorkcollege.ac.uk/about/governance-and-reports/policies-and-procedures>



**HOMESTAY HANDBOOK**  
**HOST VERSION**  
**2023/24**

Published August 2023