

Homestay Handbook - 2012



**MAYFLOWER
COLLEGE**



● Mayflower College...

The Mayflower College specialises in providing English Language courses for non-native speakers of English. We are a small, private organisation situated at 1 Radford Road (West Hoe) Plymouth. The college is open all year except for Bank Holidays and for 2 weeks at Christmas. Throughout the year we offer courses for individual adults (students over 18) and closed groups (adult and juniors). During the months of June, July and August we operate a Summer School for junior students between 13 and 17 years who study on our Junior Activity courses.

Most adult students follow our General English programme, studying for 15 or 25 hours per week. Lessons are from 09:15 to 12:30 each morning and then from 13:30 to 15:30 each afternoon (Monday to Friday). On Monday mornings there is an induction for all new students at 09:00, so on the first day please ensure that you bring your student to the college for 09:00.

Juniors study from 09:00 to 12:15 each morning and follow a programme of activities in the afternoon (Monday to Friday). You will receive a timetable of study and activities for your junior student so you know what they will be doing each day.

Each Saturday there is a full-day excursion to a local place of interest in Devon or Cornwall. For junior students the excursion is part of their programme and attendance is compulsory (unless the student is unwell or if you have contacted the college to advise us that you have other plans for the weekend in which the student can participate).

For adult students the Saturday excursion is optional (but free of charge) and students wishing to attend just need to sign up on a list located in the college's reception.

● Why Homestay accommodation?

The majority of students prefer to stay with an English host family. Very often students are away from home for the first time and they choose to stay with a family because they want to spend time in a family atmosphere, not just to rent a room. It is an excellent chance for the students to learn first hand about English language and culture. Staying with a family is also an excellent way for a student to practice speaking English!

Students will have different expectations of homestay (host family) accommodation. All students will want to be treated as a member of the family – for example they will usually wish to eat their meals with you and may wish to spend some time talking to you in the evenings. It is important that you are open minded and able to respect different cultures and beliefs!

Some students may take more time to settle in than others and it is a good idea to think about how you or your child might feel in a similar situation and how you would like yourself or your child to be treated.

● Accommodation

Students will usually request to stay in a single room. A student should only share a room if the student has requested to share and this must be agreed with the college in advance. Furniture in the room should include a comfortable bed, wardrobe, chest of drawers and a desk and chair for private study. The room should have adequate heating and natural lighting.

● Meals and food

The students wish to fit in with your lifestyle and experience the British way of life, including the food. Very few of us eat a full English breakfast these days and it would be considered a treat if given and not something to be expected everyday! If a student has specified a particular diet, you will be informed before the student arrives.

Please ensure that you tell the student what time they should be home for their evening meal, as in some countries the evening meal is eaten later!

You will be expected to provide a packed lunch for junior students. A typical packed lunch consists of filled sandwiches or rolls, fruit, yoghurt, a packet of crisps, cake or biscuits and something to drink. Packed lunches can be a problem sometimes, mainly from the point of view of cultural difference. In many countries a more substantial meal is eaten at lunchtime and so students feel that they are not getting enough to eat. Students usually get used to the idea of having a packed lunch. It is a good idea to vary the sandwich fillings and contents of the lunch. Regarding all meals, the best method is to discuss with the student their likes and dislikes.

● The British Council accreditation and English UK membership schemes

The Mayflower College is accredited by The British Council and is a member of ENGLISH UK so there are certain accommodation standards and codes of practice that must be adhered to.

A copy of the **Code of Practice** must be signed and returned to the college. The details are given below for your reference:



Code of Practice

1. *To encourage the student to speak as much English as possible in your home, and to use English as the language of communication at all times.*
2. *To encourage the student to feel at home and to treat him/her as a member of the family, rather than a fee paying guest.*
3. *Not to host another student of the same native language at the same time unless by special arrangement with the Mayflower College.*
4. *To provide a clean and comfortable student's room meeting the physical requirements laid down by the Mayflower College. The following should be made available to the student:*
5. *sufficiently spacious bedroom and adequately-sized bed, equipped with natural light*
6. *light laundry or clearly explained laundry facilities*
7. *table for private study and adequate hanging and drawer space for clothes*
8. *adequate heating and lighting*
9. *adequate washing facilities and access to the bathroom as a member of the household, with bath and/or showers available daily*
10. *change of bed linen and towels each week and a good supply of blankets*
11. *a proper state of repair and cleanliness in the house*
12. *access to the telephone for incoming calls, reverse charges calls and outgoing calls with prior permission of the family*
13. *appropriate privacy from members of the opposite sex*
14. *To provide a home environment in which it is possible for the student to carry on his/her English studies properly*
15. *To provide the student with a balanced and appropriate diet to include, for adults, breakfast and an evening meal from Monday to Friday and breakfast, packed lunch and an evening meal on Saturday and Sunday unless otherwise advised by the Mayflower College. For juniors to provide breakfast, packed lunch and evening meal everyday unless otherwise advised by the Mayflower College. Under normal circumstances the student will eat their meals with the rest of the family.*
16. *At all times to show due concern for welfare, safety and security of the student, both at home and outside.*
17. *To collect junior students during the summer months from evening activities, if requested.*
18. *If hosting juniors under 16 years, then it is important not to lodge students over 18 year at the same time.*
19. *To allow, on occasions, older students to return home from evening activities at a later time e.g. 11.30pm*
20. *To meet the student upon arrival and drop them at their departure point*
21. *To escort the student to and from the Mayflower College on the first day of their course.*
22. *To provide the student with the relevant bus timetable information*
23. *To provide the student with your home telephone number*
24. *Not to host more than 4 international students at one time, regardless of which institution they come from.*
25. *Payment arrangements and correspondence between host families and the Mayflower College are private and confidential. Please do not discuss any payment issues with students, you must contact the Mayflower College.*

● Help and advice

Please feel free to contact the College if you require any advice or have any problems. Our staff are: Jill Tyler (General Manager), Neil Vogler (Student Services Accommodation Officer), Laura Bishop (Student Services Junior Welfare Officer), and Aaron Dillon (Student Services Adult Welfare Officer). We are available at the Mayflower College between 08:30 and 17:30 hours. Outside of these hours, you can leave a message on the answer machine and a member of staff will call you back as soon as possible.

Communication problems may arise due to language difficulties and we may be able to help by talking to both you and the student. If there is a group leader you can contact them for help and advice if there are any problems (you will be given the telephone number).

● Heating

The house should have central heating and heating should be provided in the student(s) room, although it is accepted that rooms are not usually heated at night. Please be aware that students may find rooms very cold at night, so please offer extra blankets/duvets or even hot water bottles.

If you have gas appliances you have certain obligations to make sure that these appliances are safe. As a host providing accommodation you are classified as Landlords/Landladies under the Gas Safety Regulation (Installation and Use) Act 1996. This means that you should confirm to the regulations by ensuring that all gas appliances are installed and serviced by "competent persons" i.e. servicing which is carried out by businesses which are members of the Confederation of Registered Gas Installers (CORGI).

● Use of household appliances

Baths and/or showers should be available daily. You will need to tell the student how to use the shower and please ensure that the student knows the times when water is hot. You may also need to tell the student how to turn on the heating and how to use household appliances. Please note that the standard mains power in the UK is 240v and this is different from many other countries – you may need to tell your student about this.

● Fire Safety

As hosts of fee-paying guests, you have a responsibility by law to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment, which you should retain for your records in the event that Mayflower College or another relevant organisation would need to see it. A sample Fire Risk Assessment form and more guidelines can be found at the following web address: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/payingguests>.

● Laundry

You will be expected to do light laundry for the student. Please ensure that the student knows about any washing routines and where they should put their dirty laundry. You are expected to provide a clean change of sheets and bed linen each week.

● Telephone

Students are not entitled to use your telephone freely. Upon arrival, if they wish to, they should make a reversed charges call (dial the international operator on 155) or arrange to pay you for the call. We sell telephone cards at the college. The main advantage of the telephone card is that it can be used from any telephone as it works like a charge card. The caller dials a free phone number to access a main telephone system, dials the pin number on the card and dials the telephone number in the normal way. There is no charge to the host family and all calls made by the student are automatically deducted from their card in the same manner as a conventional charge card. This card can be used for international and local calls.

● Internet

If you can offer your students free access to the internet, this is desirable, but not essential. If you do not have internet access at home, you can advise your student that internet access and wi-fi are available at the Mayflower College, Monday to Friday during office hours.



Jill Tyler
General Manager



Neil Vogler
Accommodation Officer



Aaron Dillon
Adult Welfare Officer



Laura Bishop
Junior Welfare Officer

● Providing a house key

Adult students will expect to be given a key to the front door. Do not give a key to juniors under 16 years as they cannot be expected to be responsible for a key and there should always be an adult at home whilst they are in the house. Where a student is between 16 and 18 you can issue a key at your discretion.

● Emergencies

Mayflower College Mobile 07889 420601

Juniors

In the event of an emergency (illness, etc) occurring in the evening you should contact the group leader in the first instance. The local telephone number will be given to you in a letter detailing your student's stay. The group leader has the emergency telephone number of a member of staff who will be able to assist. If your student does not have a group leader, then please call the Mayflower College emergency mobile. We keep emergency contact details for all juniors' parents/guardians. We do rely on your help, in such an event, to treat the student as a member of your family and to call the family doctor or the emergency services. Your junior student will also be given a 24 hour emergency mobile contact number for the Mayflower College to call in the event of an emergency (if they are lost or in need of assistance).

If a student goes missing, contact the group leader, the school and if necessary, the police. Please note that Devon and Cornwall Police have a dedicated emergency mobile number just for international students 07917 264625. There are 2 named Police Community Support Officers: Katy Fisher and Pablo Beckhurst. If you have a non-urgent enquiry call 101, or email: 101@devon-cornwall.police.uk

Adults

The same procedures apply as above. Often there is no group leader in which case a message can be left on the answer machine (24 hours) at the Mayflower College and a member of staff will be in contact with you as soon as possible.

● Doctors, Dentists and Hospitals

If the student should need to see a doctor then your own GP will be able to help. There is a reciprocal agreement between EC countries and some other countries to visit a GP without paying. All students will need to complete a Temporary Residents form, stating their local address.

The following NHS treatment is free for everyone:

- some emergency treatment (but not follow-up treatment)
- family planning services
- diagnosis and treatment of certain communicable diseases
- compulsory psychiatric treatment

To qualify for any other NHS treatment, international students must meet certain conditions. Please contact the Mayflower College for further information.:

If your own GP is unable to see the student quickly and in an emergency, we can use the West Hoe Surgery (2 Cliff Road, telephone: 660105). There are 'open surgeries' (where appointments are not needed) from 09.00 to 10.30 each weekday morning. From 13.30 to 18.00 each weekday afternoon (except Wednesdays) there is an 'appointments only' system. However, West Hoe Surgery will only deal with medical emergencies requiring immediate treatment.

There is also a **Minor Accident Unit** that is open daily from 09.00 to 17.30 hours. They will treat minor injuries such as cuts and bruises, sprains and strains, burns and scalds, falls, bites and stings. After 18.30hrs for an emergency appointment with a Doctor, call Devon Doctors on 0845 6710270. Serious medical emergencies should be treated at **Derriford Hospital** Accident & Emergency unit.

Minor Accident Unit - Tel. 0845 155 8003 (Open 8.30AM to 9.00PM seven days a week)
Cumberland Centre, Damerel Close, Off Madden Road, Devonport

Devon Doctors - Tel. 0845 6710270

Dental Service Tel. 0845 1558070- Seventrees Clinic, Baring Street, Greenbank

Opening Hours - Monday to Friday 8.45AM to 5.00PM

(Weekends – emergency appointments only – please ring 01392 823682 to make an appointment)

Derriford Hospital 0845 1558155 - Derriford Road, Plymouth

NHS Direct 0845 46 47 - www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Police - for any issues relating to International students including **emergencies call 07917 264625** or 999 for non-urgent enquiries call 101 or email 101@devon-cornwall.police.uk

Mayflower College Tel. 01752 673784, Mobile (emergencies only) 07889 420 601

● Meeting your student upon arrival

You are expected to meet your student upon arrival in Plymouth and to take them to their point of departure. Please note that with individual arrivals (where students travel independently) no member of staff from Mayflower College will be present. However when students are travelling as part of a group, a member of staff will be there to introduce you to your students.

If you are unable to meet your student or to take them to their point of departure, you can make alternative arrangements (e.g taxi transfer), but you must advise the Mayflower College of any alternative arrangements made.

You will be telephoned in the week before the student(s) arrive to re-confirm their arrival details. **Please note that the student's arrival information is often the last piece of information that we receive from them, so it is normal to receive a phone call or email from us on the last working day before they are due to arrive.**

● Transport

The host family agrees to the following:

- to meet the student upon arrival in Plymouth
- to bring the student to the school on the first morning
- to collect the student after their lessons or activities on the first day
- to ensure that the student is taken in time to their point of departure

With younger students there may be additional requests to collect them from evening activities. If you have difficulties with transportation, please contact the college so that we can advise on possible alternatives.

● Bus passes

If a student is travelling as part of a group, they will usually receive a bus pass with their information pack on arrival. If a student is travelling alone we will advise them on their first day where to buy the relevant bus pass.

Please ensure that you give the student advice about where to catch the bus, directions, bus numbers and timetables.

● Hosting junior students (care of under 18's)

The supervision and care of juniors will be shared by the Mayflower College (during lessons and activities) and homestay providers (evening and weekends). There are additional considerations for families who host junior students (i.e. children under the age of 18): you have a "duty of care" in common law to act "as a reasonably prudent parent would". Please look after junior students, as you would your own child. You should know their whereabouts at all times and please do not hesitate to contact us for advice and guidance in the event of any emergency. Call Mayflower College 01752 673784 during office hours or the 24 hours emergency mobile is 07889 420601 .

Mayflower College has an enhanced duty towards children, termed "safeguarding" which is also part of the common-law "duty of care". Safeguarding means taking reasonable measures to ensure the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised and where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, to take all appropriate actions to address those concerns.

You and members of your family will be asked to sign a declaration form to verify that none of you have any criminal convictions against children or have had a child removed from your care by order of a court. Where applicable, you may be asked to provide evidence of a CRB check or to undergo a CRB check if requested. The County Council's Social Services Department may also check this information.

If you accept a child under 16 in your care for more than 28 days (27 nights) you will be required to register as a foster parent. You may not host more than 4 international children (under 16) at one time. Please note that if you host students under 16 years of age, then you should not host them with students of 18 years or over.

A responsible adult must always be present overnight and normally present when students under 18 years old are at home. You may also be required to collect junior students from evening activities and there should always be a responsible adult at home when the child returns.

We have a separate sheet "Host family information sheet" which will be updated and sent to you each year with the relevant emergency mobile contact numbers and information regarding the summer school.

● Junior welfare (care of under 18's)

Juniors (under 18 years) require full board accommodation (breakfast, packed lunch and evening meal) unless we advise you otherwise. Junior students should be treated as your own children regarding welfare. They may need encouragement with the daily routines of washing, bathing and handing over laundry. Please note that if your junior student is ill, notify the Mayflower College and ask for any assistance with medical advice. Students are expected to return home promptly after the activities finish each day. Activity finish times are given at Royal Parade (in the city centre), students will be escorted to Royal Parade by their teachers and students will be expected to take their bus back to their homestay. With regard to going out in the evenings this should be restricted unless they have obtained permission from their group leader and either the group leader or college has confirmed it. Students and Parents sign a consent form to agree to the curfew times given below:

Evenings (rules for juniors)

Students under the **age of 14 should not be allowed out** unless accompanied by an adult i.e. participating in an activity organised by either the family, the group leader or the school.

Students from 14 to 16 years should not be out alone. They could be out in pairs or a group but should have returned home by 21.00 hours unless, as before, they are participating in an activity organised by the family, group leader or college. **Older teenagers (17 years +) should have returned home by 22.00 hours.** If the group leaders have any specific rules or requirements we will inform you prior to the student's arrival.

Sundays and free-time (rules for juniors)

In most instances, students are free on Sundays to spend the day with their host family. Students should not go out alone (must be in pairs or small groups and for a restricted time) on these days. If you let your students go out, please make sure that you know where they are going (it is your duty to know their whereabouts at all times), who they are going with and agree a time when they must return. If the group leaders plan to take their students out on Sundays, either the Mayflower College or the group leader will contact you to inform you.

● Care of Under 18's on Adult Courses

Our Adult General English courses are designed for students aged 16 years and over. Therefore at times there may be students under 18 studying with adults over 18 years. In this case, the parents are advised that their under 18 will be unsupervised during the day and after College has finished. We also ask the students and parents to sign a consent form, agreeing to adhere to rules in the host family and draw attention to the fact that it is illegal to smoke or drink

It is good practice to take a contact mobile number for them. If you have any problems or queries regarding the care of your under 18's please do not hesitate to contact us for advice and guidance.

● Booking arrangements

We will take into account the preferences of both you and the student when arranging accommodation. When we have received a booking from a student, we will telephone to give you a brief profile of the student and to see if you wish to host the student. If you are happy to host the student we will then send you a booking confirmation that will include details of the student (name, age, nationality, profession, interests, etc) and their arrival and departure dates.

● Fees

The following rates apply:

Individual Adult /Juniors Students: £88 per week*

(*Provide breakfast and evening meal Monday to Friday, but breakfast, packed lunch and evening meal at weekends)

Individual Junior Summer-school Students: £93 per week*

(*Provide breakfast, packed lunch and evening meal every day)

Please note that students should only share a room with another student if specified by the Mayflower College (i.e. the students must have requested to share a room)

All queries regarding payments should be referred to the Mayflower College. Please do not accept direct payment from the student without prior consultation with the college.

● Payment

You will be paid directly into your bank or building society account approximately one week in arrears and up to four weeks in advance. You will not receive documentation to say how much you have been paid. If you have any queries about payments received or pending, please telephone the college.

● Cancellation and compensation

No compensation is payable for cancellation or postponement before the day of arrival. However Mayflower College will try to find you a suitable replacement student as soon as possible. If you wish to cancel a booking, please make sure that you do so as soon as possible before the student arrives. Please note that money will be deducted if a student leaves early for any reason, or alternatively it will be carried over as a prepayment for a future student.

If, for whatever reason, you feel as though you want to terminate an accommodation arrangement whilst a student is staying with you, you have the right to do so, but we ask that you phone us immediately in the first instance to discuss the options. Some students will need more time to settle in and adapt to English life than others, and there may often be other factors relating to their welfare that need to be taken into account. Where a move is seen as necessary, Mayflower College will endeavour to make other arrangements for the student as soon as it is possible. However, this can sometimes take between 1-3 days.

Likewise, if a student ultimately decides to transfer to other accommodation from your home, we will give you as much notice as possible. Please note, however, that your host family payments will need to be adjusted in the event of such an occurrence.

● Student Holiday

Students who wish to take a holiday and leave their belongings with the family must pay a retainer fee of £30. The student must pay this fee to the college. The college will then pay the host family. The family has the right to waive this fee.

● Insurance

Students are advised by their travel agents, agents and on our enrolment form that they should take out personal insurance to cover health, personal possessions and travel. The college's insurance policy does not cover the student in the family home. For any accidents, breakages or thefts that may occur in your home you should consult your own house insurance policy. It is advisable to inform your insurance company that you host foreign students.

● Income tax

By law it is your responsibility to inform the Inland Revenue of any earned income. At the time of writing there is a "rental allowance" of £4250 per household in addition to any personal tax allowance. This means that you are able to earn £4250 gross from paying guests without paying any tax. Any income from paying guests over this amount is taxed at your personal rate. If you do not receive any income from any other source your personal allowance is added to your rental allowance. Depending on your circumstances you may have to complete a self-assessment form (please ask for advice from the tax office). You can opt for paying tax on all your income, less expenses incurred by hosting the student but you will have to prove exactly how much was spent on electricity, gas, food and entertaining. As the rental allowance is quite generous, we suggest that you choose the option of rental allowance.

● Contact:

Mr Neil Vogler, Accommodation Officer
Mayflower College, 1 Radford Road, Plymouth PL1 3BY

Tel. ++44-1752-673784 Fax. ++44-1752-671537
Email: neil@maycoll.co.uk
www.maycoll.co.uk

