



**Castle School of English**  
LEARN FOR LIFE



# Group Student Handbook

**WELCOME TO BRIGHTON! 😊**

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## **Welcome to CASTLE SCHOOL**

The Castle School team extends a warm welcome to all our students and guests.

We hope you have a fantastic stay with us in Brighton.

Here are some contacts that you might find useful during your stay:

Alba Miranda (Operations Manager): +44 7585339493

Castle School Office: +44 1273748185

School Emergency Number (24h): +44 7440552496

For emergency services (Police, Ambulance, Fire) dial **999**



## **Brighton & Hove**

In 2001 Brighton & Hove became Britain's newest city, a title given by the Queen as part of the celebrations to commemorate her Golden Jubilee. The city is one of the most popular seaside resorts in the UK, and welcomes thousands of tourists every year. **Brighton Pier** is England's second most popular tourist attraction.

Brighton & Hove's most famous landmark is the **Royal Pavilion**, built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century for King George IV and formerly home to three British monarchs. Decorated in an Oriental taste with an Indian exterior, this Regency Palace is quite eccentric and spectacular. The Pavilion is now a museum and is open to the public daily. Other museums to visit include: the recently renovated **Brighton Museum, Hove Museum & Art Gallery, Preston Manor** (a Victorian manor house), **the Booth Museum** (natural history) and the **Sea Life Centre Aquarium**.

The city has great shopping facilities. Brighton's famous **Lanes**, the shopping quarter, which is most popular with visitors to the town, consists of a maze of narrow alleyways connecting the principal streets of the old town. The **North Laine** area, which is well-worth a visit for all of its quirky shops and cafes, also hosts a more unusual gift and a street market on Saturday mornings. **Western Road** and **Churchill Square** shopping centre is where you will find most of the large department stores.





## **Education & Activities**

On your first day you will all be asked to be at a meeting point from which a member of castle School will meet you to take you to your classes.

You will be informed on arrival of this meeting point and your host families will explain in detail how to get there on your first morning.

We will take you to one of our school sites (Clarendon Centre, Brighthelm Centre of Dyke Road Centre) which is where you will have classes for the duration of your stay.

If your programme includes activities, we will give you daily instructions regarding meeting points and times. Please note activities are not optional, and you are expected to be on time for both your lessons and at all meeting points!

## **The first day of the course**

Your first day will either start with a level test, or, if you have already done this at home, we will put you straight into classes and you can start your lessons immediately!

You may be a bit nervous on your first day but don't worry- our teachers are super-friendly and will make you feel at home immediately!

Make sure you always have pen and paper with you!

## **Too easy, too difficult?**

If you feel that your class is not the correct level for you, please discuss the matter with your teacher and with your Group Leaders and we will find ways to help you!

## **Going out in the evening**

Your group leaders will decide a time that you must be at home every night. This time will be given to you on arrival and will be confirmed with your host families. It will not be later than 10.00PM. Please note that this is taken seriously and if you do not follow this rule you may be required to return to your home.



## **Castle School Rules**

These rules have been made to help you and your teachers enjoy your time at this school, and help you improve your English as quickly as possible.

**It is very important to understand these rules, because if you break them you will eventually be asked to leave the school with no money refunded. It is your responsibility to ask your teacher or a member of staff about any rules that you do not understand.**

### **The classroom**

1. You must speak English at all times during class.
2. Your mobile phone must be turned **off** at all times in the classroom.
3. You must arrive on time. This means you should be sitting in your classroom a few minutes **before** the start of the class.

**IF YOU ARE LATE FOR ANY REASON YOU MUST INFORM ONE OF YOUR GROUP LEADERS.**

### **Other rules**

4. You must give your mobile number to your teacher and to the homestay family.
5. Your teacher must know where you are at all times.
6. You must get permission from your teacher before going anywhere without a teacher or group leader.
7. You must be on time for all classes and trips.
8. Do not go anywhere alone. Always stay with a friend at all times.
9. Please take care crossing the road. The traffic is on the other side.
10. If you are delayed for any reason you must call your leader.
11. You must contact the host families if you will be late for dinner, are eating out, or are going to be late home at night.
12. Buying cigarettes or alcohol when you are under 18 is against the law. Students under 18 found drinking (or under the influence of alcohol) or smoking and students over 18 found buying tobacco products or alcohol for minors will be sent home with no refund.
13. Illegal drug purchase and use will not be tolerated. Students caught in possession, attempting to buy, or under the influence of illegal drugs will be sent home with no refund.
14. Bullying and threatening or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

**For your safety, we ask that you are contactable at all times. If you have problems with your phone while in the UK, please speak to a member of staff or one of your Group Leaders.**



## **Homestay Accommodation- What to Expect**

### **What makes a host family?**

Some of our families are typical families, a mother, father and children. Some families have pets as in English culture pets are a big part of the family: from cats and dogs to tropical fish, rabbits and Guinea pigs. If you have allergies to any animals or fur, it's important to let us know about this at the time of booking. Some of our families may consist of one parent and children or even parents, grandparents and children. After all, family is family!

Some of our host families may be second or third generation immigrants. This means that although they may look foreign, they have lived in the UK all their lives and have a British passport. English is their first language.

Do remember that you are here to experience a different culture, and that many things may be very different to how they are at home. However, you will find the experience very enjoyable if you are prepared for difference.

### **What about the house?**

In England, houses and bedrooms are generally quite small, especially compared to some of our European neighbours. However when we inspect our host families, we ensure that students have everything they need.

One of the most common requests we receive for host family, is that the family lives close to the school. Of course we try and help students with this but it is not always possible. We are the most centrally located English Language School in Brighton. You can find anything you might need within a five minute walk. Host families don't live in the city centre as there are no houses to buy. Therefore, the average journey time to school is 25-35 minutes. This may seem like a long time, but compared to some other UK cities this is actually not a long journey at all.

### **What if there is a problem?**

We endeavour to check our host families regularly and we also rely on student feedback to help us make sure our host families continue to provide a great service. If you have any trouble with your accommodation, please do speak to any member of staff as soon as possible, so that we can resolve the issue quickly and effectively. We will not be able to help you unless you tell us!



## Staying Safe

Brighton & Hove is a safe city. However, as in every city, you need to exercise caution. Here are some tips:

- Do not walk alone after dark- stay with your friends or your teachers.
- If you get lost, don't panic! Call your host family, one of your group leaders or Castle School and we will come and help you. If you want to get a taxi, always get a green and white licensed taxi, as these are safe.
- In the UK vehicles drive on the left. **PLEASE BE CAREFUL WHEN CROSSING THE ROAD.** Use pedestrian crossings whenever possible and don't cross between parked cars.
- Theft is commonplace in busy places, as in any country, especially in tourist areas. Be careful of your bag, wallet and any valuables, and never leave them unattended.
- Do not leave your belongings unattended in school.



Do not talk to strangers.



Walk to and from school in groups. If you go out with your friends make sure you stay together even if you fall out.



Never accept a ride from strangers.



Do not take gifts from people you do not know.



Tell someone you trust if someone is making you feel uncomfortable.



Report all suspicious behaviour and "new adult friends" to Parents/ Carers.



Never leave home without telling your hosts/group leaders where you are going.



Never take shortcuts. Stay on main roads that you know.





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**The information in this guide is given in good faith and has been carefully checked. Castle School, however, accepts no legal responsibility for its accuracy. E&OE 2017**



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