

Welcome

On behalf of Equinox Education Services (EES), I would like to welcome your participation in our Host Family scheme. Our students come to us on the understanding that they are to be part of an Irish family and they too must do their best to conform to that family's way of life. Students should not treat your home as a hostel/hotel. They will have received detailed notes on do's and don'ts while living with an Irish family. A good general guideline for families would be to imagine how they would like their child to be treated if he/she went to live with a family abroad.

The host families who show genuine friendliness and concern for their students' well-being are less likely to have problems and usually get considerable enjoyment from the experience of having an overseas student to stay. Good Luck!



Noel Doyle - Founder & Managing Director

Hosting Academic Term & Year students

Hosting for the Academic Term or Year involves some extra responsibilities above and beyond hosting for the summer or short-term programmes.

As in the case of all Equinox Education Services programmes host **families can only host one student** of the same nationality at a time.

Host Families that host students for Academic Term or Year programs agree to bring their student to **two family activities per month**. This could include a visit to Dublin, Kilkenny etc, go to the cinema together.

Equinox Education Services will provide **4 Full day excursions** per academic year. These will be arranged and agreed in August of each year. There will be 2 before Christmas and 2 after Christmas. Details of these trips will be sent with you in due course.

We hope the notes included in this booklet will not only help new families but will also refresh others on the many aspects that the commitments of acting as host families present. It is very important that all families carefully read through these notes. As usual, we will be only too happy to hear from you if you need further advice.

Accommodation



Picture for illustrative purposes only.

The student must be provided with a nice clean room with basic, furniture such as:

- Comfortable bed (including linen, duvet cover, blanket and two pillows)
- Single Room (All Equinox Term and Academic Year students must have their own room)
- Night table, lamp, and alarm clock/radio
- Work desk with chair and desk lamp with enough lighting.

We require good sized rooms with adequate space for clothes, etc. We only make an exception to this rule in the case of a special request from students (friends, brothers, sisters) to be placed in the same house. It is family Accommodation, not lodging accommodation which is required.

When the Students Arrive

Irish families are kind, hospitable, and do not need to be reminded of their responsibilities. However, we have set the following guidelines for all host families to adhere to, as we set guidelines for the student or visitor, in order to make the best homestay experience possible.

The Welcome

First impressions are all-important! Please remember your student will be very eager to meet you, and anxious to feel that they will be happy with you during their stay.

Picking Up Your Student

All families are asked to meet their visitor at the pick-up point.

Delays

If the plane/train/boat/bus is delayed, we do our best to inform you as soon as we have this information. We understand how tiresome it is waiting around without news. We do all in our power to avoid this situation, but as most of you will know, delays are a seasonal hazard.

Food on Arrival

Most students arrive tired, perhaps homesick and usually lost for words! Please offer them suitable food and drink according to the time of arrival.

First Day Practicalities

Host families should write their name, address and telephone number and give it to their student (although most students should arrive with this information to hand).

Getting to the school

It is very important that the host families bring the student to the school the first couple of days. An Equinox Staff Member will meet you on the first day at school. The students have a lot to cope with during the first few days and this sort of care is vital.

Day to Day Care

Food and Meals

You will appreciate that overseas students are usually going to find Irish food very different from their own especially Asian students. Although this has been explained to the student as part of their preparation before arriving, it can still cause a problem. Most host families will ask their student on the first day to make a list of any specific dislikes, and by mutual co-operation any undue worry can be avoided.

Every day the host family must provide nutritious meals, mostly homemade. The meals, especially dinner, should be served in a family gathering and the student or visitor must always feel welcome to the table. Healthy snacks such as yogurt, fresh fruits, milk, juice, tea/coffee etc. need to be accessible to the student or visitor. No alcohol is to be offered to any student under 18 years old (Under 20 for Asia).

Payment & Cancellations

Please note that due to the nature of hosting students EES cannot be responsible if a student cancels before arrival as this will always be outside our control. As such host families are only paid the nightly rate for each night that they actually host a student(s). If a student cancels, we will inform you straight away once EES is made aware of the cancellation. A nightly payment is made if a student cancels before the end of their stay or departs a time shorter than a calendar month.

GENERAL

1. The host family must make sure that the student has a quiet environment in order to study and succeed in school, as well as quiet time to sleep and rest.
2. The host family must speak English with, and while in the presence of, the student.
3. The host Family **cannot** Host a student of the same nationality or with the same first language for the same duration. Occasionally we will have requests for 2 students to stay together but this is the exception.
4. The host family is not allowed to lend any type of vehicle to the student or visitor
5. If the host family has any concerns that they cannot discuss directly with the student, please contact your Programme Co-Ordinator or Accommodation Office as soon as possible.
6. Homestay minors must **not** be left at home without adult host family member supervision.
7. Of course, no alcohol or illegal drugs to be offered to any students under any circumstances.
8. If a student accompanies their host family on holidays, outings, or trips, the host family must pay for accommodation and food. The student/leader must pay for his or her own travel arrangements, admission tickets, or personal expenses and the student/leader must **first** receive written permission from EES. If the student does not join the host family, he or she must not be left alone without adult supervision.
9. Host families must be available for the full duration of the programme. If an emergency arises like family funeral etc host families must contact Program Co-Ordinator / Accommodation Officer immediately.
10. The host family should familiarize students with the use of washer and dryer, so they can do their own laundry.
11. Students **cannot** attend Discos or House Parties that are not supervised by their school, host family or EES.
12. Upon a successful inspection by EES Accommodation office and all the relevant paper
13. work done; you will then be added to our host family database.
14. You can request to be removed from our host family database at any time.
15. Host family must explain to the student how to evacuate the home in case of an emergency. The home must have functioning fire smoke detectors on every floor.
16. All members of the family must be willing to accept and host a student. Please make sure that all members of your family agree and are not just going along with the idea of hosting a student. It is such a wonderful experience, but the student must be welcomed by everyone in your household.
17. While the student can be invited to attend religious services, the family should not apply any pressure to do so. The family should learn about the students' belief and culture and respect them. The family should always be willing to direct the student to his or her religion's place of worship if required. A host family must always respect the religious beliefs of the student.
18. The Programme Co-Ordinators / Accommodation Officer reserves the right to move the student if it is in the best interest of the student.
19. Termination of the homestay provider agreement can happen in case of a breach of the homestay agreement or the host family's guidelines and responsibilities.
20. Your confirmation letter will include details of any special arrangements required for any particular group e.g. any special requirement for students transferring to/from school each day.
21. Equinox Education Services Ltd. does not allow any discrimination against students including negative comments on social media, all families who wish to host for Equinox Education Services Ltd must agree and comply with the above host family guidelines.

Being a host family with Equinox (EES) is a unique, rewarding, fun and educational experience for all members of the family and an opportunity to create many unforgettable memories for our students. As an overriding principle for hosting, we ask families to remember to treat their own student as part of your family.

Thank you for your time in reading this document and we look forward to working with you.

Agreement for hosting Academic Term & Year students

In order to ensure the success of the hosting experience for the student so that he / she has the best immersive learning and cultural experience possible, we ask ALL families to follow these mutually agreed conditions and sign and return this form to Equinox Education Services Ltd: -

1. We agree to provide two family activities per month as outline in the above-mentioned document.
2. Families that host winter students attending local secondary schools are expected to bring their student to acquire their school uniform. Details will be given prior to their arrival.
3. Under no circumstances should students be left alone overnight without the supervision of an adult.
4. It is EES strict policy that students are **not** permitted to travel outside their town/city without adult supervision.
5. Payment will be processed each calendar month (The first working Monday of each Month). However, we do not pay for Christmas and Easter holidays. Therefore, families will only be paid for nights in which the student stayed with them prior to them going home for Christmas and Easter.
6. If Host Families agree to transfer and check in the students to/from the airport for Christmas and Easter Holidays you will receive an extra payment. **Yes** **No**
7. If for some reason the student must be moved to another family you will only be paid for the nights in which the student stayed with you. You will be still paid within 5 working days of a student's departure from your home.
8. It is understood that the host family is not an employee of EES and that they look after their own tax issues.
9. I the undersigned confirm and agree we have read and fully understand the Host Family Agreement for hosting Academic Term/Year guidelines. **Yes** **No**

I have read, understand and accept Equinox Education Services Ltd terms and conditions for Hosting students for Academic Term / Year: - 2021/22

Name in Block Letters _____

Address : _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please return this page to
Equinox Education Services Ltd
Carlow Gateway Business Centre
Athy Road
Carlow
R93 C7P6