

EDGEWATER COLLEGE GUIDE TO HOST FAMILIES



Say Faillte, Hola and Bonjour to new experiences!

EDGEWATER COLLEGE invites you and your family to enjoy an enriching and rewarding experience of becoming a host family. Every year, EDGEWATER COLLEGE welcomes many foreign students to the town of Drogheda. Staying with a family is a very important part of learning English and becoming familiar with Irish culture and way of life. For both our culture and our economy it's a mutually rewarding experience.

For the host family it's a fascinating and rewarding experience and an opportunity to see Ireland and Drogheda through fresh eyes and to get a window into another culture. For your generosity of spirit you'll be financially rewarded for each student who stays with you. EDGEWATER COLLEGE have a dedicated Student Welfare Officer who ensures that our Host family standards are maintained.

Host families will be visited and inspected by EDGEWATER COLLEGE to assess their suitability and monitored on a regular basis.

Who can host a student?

Our Host Families come in all shapes and sizes, and can include:

- Working parents
- Couples without children
- Singles and single parents
- Adoptive parents
- Empty-nesters

All Host Families must be located within close proximity to EDGEWATER COLLEGE in Drogheda – ideally within a maximum 30 minutes walking distance.

The Role of the Host Family:

First and foremost, the student should feel welcome and be well looked after and treated as a member of the family during his/her stay.

The family must be friendly and interested in the students they host. The Host Family accommodation should be clean and well-maintained throughout. Host families will be visited and inspected by EDGEWATER COLLEGE to assess their suitability and monitored on a regular basis.

As a host family, you play a unique role in helping our students discover life in Ireland. We expect you to welcome our students into your home as a member of the family, rather than as a guest or tourist. You are responsible for introducing your student to Irish culture through the normal support of a caring, understanding family. Host families should provide affection, meals, a bed, and more - just as you would for your own family members.

EDGEWATER COLLEGE GUIDE TO HOST FAMILIES

The opportunity to speak English

It is very important that you speak with your student as much as possible and give them the opportunity to speak English, after all it is the main reason they are here. Often our students are given homework/projects where they must speak with their host family. It may be difficult for them to approach you, so please encourage them to speak with you and your family, ask them how their day went, what they did in school etc. Ask them about their home country, their family etc. Students tend to learn more from their host families than their classes and as a host family, you play a vital part in the student's language development.

Ensure to involve your student in your family activities and make time for them - eat meals together, go for a walk, watch TV together.

It doesn't cost much- just a bit of time, so go on, they're worth it.

Please keep in mind...

Please keep in mind that your student will probably find it difficult to understand spoken English for the first few days as he/she may have been trained through American or British English and will be a little confused with Irish accents. You just need to speak slowly and encourage the student to use their dictionary to find the key words he/she needs.

It is also important to consider that your student may be a little shy and overwhelmed with the cultural differences at first. We find that students usually settle in after about four days. Activities such as watching television, reading newspapers and interacting with native speakers are the most natural ways to learn a language.

Please ensure that your student carries your name, address and telephone number at first, as Irish names will be difficult for them. Please also make sure that the student knows some basic directions, for example, the way to town, local shops etc.

We would like you to think of your student, first and foremost, as one of the family. Our primary requirement is that the student should be well looked after during their stay.

Accommodation Requirements

THE ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS LTD. (ACELS) REQUIREMENTS FOR HOST-FAMILY ACCOMMODATION

- The primary requirement is that the student should be well looked after and treated as a member of the family during his/her stay.
- Host families should be visited and inspected by the school's accommodation officer to assess their suitability as host families and monitored on a regular basis.
- Host families should receive from the school an outline timetable of the students' classes/activities.
- Homes offering accommodation should be clean and well maintained throughout.
- Three is the maximum number of students that may be accommodated in any household and only one student of any particular mother tongue.
- Not more than two students should be accommodated in the same bedroom.
- A well balanced and varied diet should be provided.

EDGEWATER COLLEGE GUIDE TO HOST FAMILIES

The following facilities should be available to the student:

- A comfortable bed with good supply of quality bedclothes and weekly change of bed
- Adequate space for clothes storage.
- The host family should take care of the student's laundry or the student should have reasonable access to washing machine.
- Table and chair in bedroom for private study or access at all times to another room with facilities conducive to study.
- Free access to bathroom and bath or shower daily.
- Adequate heating, lighting and ventilation.

Three is the maximum number of students which may be accommodated in any household and it is strongly recommended that only one student of any particular mother tongue should be hosted by a family. Not more than two students should be accommodated in the same bedroom.

The EDGEWATER COLLEGE representative who visits you will advise you if the facilities are in compliance with the Requirements for Host Family Accommodation as per the Schedule of Required Standards for EFL schools.

What is expected of the student?

Your student will be given a welcome pack and induction presentation on arrival, they will be informed that they should:

- ✓ Be responsible and respectful towards the host family
- ✓ Attend classes and try their best
- ✓ Share his/her culture and customs
- ✓ Participate fully in family and school life

Tips for your student's first day:

- Show the student around your house, explaining how things work such as faucets, gas stove, etc. Appliances, in particular, vary a lot around the world.
- Share your household rules (e.g. no smoking in the house). Many students are too polite to ask about basic things, so take time to talk about family patterns, for example: if it's OK for them to watch TV if the family isn't, etc
- Ask them if they have any particular dietary or other needs so you can accommodate them to the extent possible.

Please see attached at the end of this document, language tips for hosts with low English level students which may be of use to you – pg12 & pg13

EDGEWATER COLLEGE GUIDE TO HOST FAMILIES

English Classes at Edgewater College

Your students class-times may vary depending on the type of course they are on. But generally classes take place every Monday to Friday, with the exception of Bank Holidays. Classes usually take place in the morning, from 09:00 am to 13:00 pm (or in the afternoon, from 13:00 pm – 17:00 pm) at EDGEWATER COLLEGE on Merchant's Quay, Drogheda (past Greene's Carpet Store, next door to Ledwith's Motor Factors).

There is a library available to students which may be used in the afternoons when your student is not in class. We assist students to join the local library where access to the Internet is free. We ask families to show students to the school on the first day and make sure the student can find the way home. If you are concerned that the student is not sure of his/her surroundings, especially if you live in a large estate with several entrances, please let a staff member know and we will assist the student.

You will receive a copy of any changes to the schedule above with regard to classes or activities.

Meals

We ask you to provide breakfast and an evening meal Monday to Friday and also lunch on Saturday and Sunday. There is no need to provide a special menu and the student should be prepared to share the same meals as the family and respect your family mealtimes. However, everybody appreciates a balanced and varied menu and most foreign students find potatoes served most days very strange!

Perhaps you can sit down with your student when they first arrive and discuss what foods they do and don't like. If you are happy to, you may suggest that they can buy some food/snacks themselves and store it in your fridge/cupboard.

Most of our junior students require full-board accommodation- this includes breakfast, a packed lunch and evening meal. A standard packed lunch would consist of: a drink, sandwiches and a snack (such as a piece of fruit, yoghurt, packet of crisps or snack bar).

Most of our adult students require full-board accommodation- this includes breakfast, and evening meal during the week and breakfast, lunch and evening meal at the weekends.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOUR STUDENT GETS THE OPPORTUNITY TO EAT MEALS WITH YOU (AND YOUR FAMILY). THIS IS AN IDEAL TIME TO INTERACT WITH YOUR STUDENT AND GIVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH.

If your student is coming home late for meals, please ask them to come in time. If you have a problem making your student understand your house rules, please contact EDGEWATER COLLEGE.

Laundry

We ask you to include the student's clothes in your usual family laundry routine, or provide reasonable access to the washing machine. If the student has any special preferences, such as dry cleaning, special care hand-washing etc, he/she must take care of this.

EDGEWATER COLLEGE GUIDE TO HOST FAMILIES

Telephone

Your student's family may want to telephone the student at your home number on the first day. Most students purchase a telephone card when they arrive. If students are staying long term they usually purchase a mobile telephone.

The student can also dial the international operator to reverse the charges ***with your permission.***

The student is aware that he/she must ask your permission to use the phone, even for calls made at no charge to you. We recommend that all calls be made under your supervision.

If you are worried about your student using the telephone in your absence, either lock away the telephone or use a locking device for your own peace of mind.

We cannot accept responsibility for any calls made in your home by your student. If the student wishes to make local calls to their friends staying in local host families, we recommend you charge 50 cent for a short call, although *there is no obligation on your part to allow use of your phone.*

Social Life

Your student will probably meet up with friends in the evenings and at weekends.

Your student (if over 18 years of age) is legally allowed to consume alcohol, but will be made aware that he/she must respect the house rules of the host family and not disturb you while coming in at night. In the unlikely event that you encounter a problem, please report it to us immediately.

You are not asked to provide a special social programme for your student, but you or your children may like to include them when going out. We would recommend that you allow at least 1 day a week (ideally Saturdays) to do something with your student. This does not have to cost money, and can involve going for a walk, meeting up with friends etc. You can also take your student on short trips and show them the surrounding areas. Ireland is often completely different to their home country, what we may be used to could be fascinating to them.

It is up to you if you want to provide the student with a key of the house, however, you are not obliged to do so. It is understandable that this may not be suitable for houses which use burglar alarms. Many families have both partners working, and if you do not wish your student to have friends back to the house in the afternoon in your absence, please make the student aware of this house rule.

Airport Collection

Inward and outward airport transfers are provided by EDGEWATER COLLEGE.

We take your student directly to your home for a warm Irish welcome. The taxi driver will have a copy of your name, address and telephone number and will call you if there is any delay with the flight. On rare occasions, students will miss flights, connecting flights, may not be able to come due to illness or family circumstances, have lost baggage, or may not have cleared Immigration Control. EDGEWATER COLLEGE will inform you of this as soon as we have this information.

EDGEWATER COLLEGE GUIDE TO HOST FAMILIES

If your student has lost his/her luggage, EDGEWATER COLLEGE will take care of the correspondence with the airport or airline. Luggage usually turns up and is delivered to the house within a day or two.

We ask that families show students to EDGEWATER COLLEGE on the first day and show them the route they should take to walk home.

Payment

Payments are made at the end of your student's stay directly to the host family's bank account details which you provide. A Bank Details form is included in this pack. Payment is made into your account by Electronic Business Banking. Please ensure that you have provided us with your bank account name, account number, and bank sort code in good time for payment. Payment is calculated on a per night basis. You will only be paid for time that the students actually stays in your house, if a student cancels or is moved to another host family, you will not be paid for the time they are gone.

Problems

As our students are from a different culture, and away from home for the first time, sometimes difficulties can occur. Usually, it is just a communication problem. In the rare event that there is an irreconcilable problem with your student, we will do our best to resolve the situation. If it is necessary, we will move the student into alternative accommodation for the rest of their stay. ***Please be assured that you will never be asked to keep the student against your wishes.***

CONTACTS AT EDGEWATER COLLEGE

We hope you are happy with the students we place with you and we ask you to please encourage them to speak English at all times while in your home.

Please contact our Student Liaison Officer Ms Susie Shi if you have any questions or concerns at 041-9846500 who will be glad to assist you with any problems you may encounter whilst hosting a student for EDGEWATER COLLEGE.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

EDGEWATER COLLEGE has a 24 hour number for use in the event of an emergency:

087-0651008

On some occasions, there may be an answering machine in operation. Please leave a message. If there is a medical emergency, please do not wait for a reply from EDGEWATER COLLEGE, please call the Emergency Services (999), and leave a message at the EDGEWATER COLLEGE 24 hour phone number.

On arrival at EDGEWATER COLLEGE, students complete a *Personal Information Form* which has details of allergies, medical conditions etc. They should take this to the hospital with them and show it to the doctor.

*Language tips for dealing with students
with a low level of English*

Students may have very basic English on their arrival.

It is easy to confuse a student's limited language skills with what might first seem as rudeness and demanding...

Students with low level English may use imperatives like:

Give me ...

Make me ...

Show me ...

They may also use:

I want ... instead of the more polite form **I would like ...**

Polite expressions of request like:

Would/Do you mind Is an expression usually learned at Intermediate level and very advanced for someone with quite basic English. Students generally can not translate it into their own language. As a result, they often avoid or forget to use it.

Can I have is more low level polite expression which students learn after several weeks at Elementary level. Beginner students would not be familiar with this.

It is best to edit your sentences when communication is proving very difficult. Choose the most important words that you want to communicate.

For positive sentences:

You are going to school tomorrow **You go school tomorrow**

You went to school yesterday **You go school yesterday**

You have to start school at 9:00 next Monday **You start school Monday**

9:00am

Students may only know some basic verbs in the present tense and may not know their past or future forms.

| Present | Past | Future |
|---------|---------|------------|
| Go | Went | Will go |
| Buy | Bought | Will buy |
| Come | Came | Will come |
| Study | Studied | Will study |
| Start | Started | Will start |

EDGEWATER COLLEGE GUIDE TO HOST FAMILIES

In this case it is best to use the present verb with an appropriate time expression:
today, tomorrow, next week etc

If necessary, further edit by eliminating the verbs:

You school tomorrow / yesterday / next Monday etc.

If they do not understand the time expressions **today / tomorrow / yesterday etc.**
illustrate by using a calendar or writing down the dates.
The time can also be explained using a clock or watch.

For negative sentences do not use auxiliary verbs: don't, doesn't, isn't, aren't, didn't, won't etc. Use **No** in their place.

**You aren't going to school tomorrow You no go school tomorrow or
Tomorrow no school
I'm not cooking dinner tomorrow I no cook dinner tomorrow or
Tomorrow no dinner**

For questions do not use auxiliary verbs. Use positive sentences but with question intonation:

**Do you want a cup of tea? You want tea?
Are you cold? You cold?**

If this is even too difficult, edit again using the most important word and the question intonation: **TEA? COLD?**

Remember, using body language and mime are excellent teaching and communication aids.

For low level students picture dictionaries are available to buy in language book shops and are also very useful.