

Addendum to the Homestay Guide: Hosting in the era of Covid-19

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Studio staff, students and hosts will need to modify their behaviour in line with UK government/ Public Health England guidelines and advice. Studio Cambridge has therefore produced this addendum to the Host Guide 2020 to provide further support during the pandemic.

What will Studio look like when it re-opens?

Studio Cambridge hopes to re-open the main school buildings on Station Road on 7th September 2020. When we do open our doors again to students, we are expecting things to look a little different at the school, at least in the short-term before Christmas.

International travel has been impacted dramatically since February 2020 by the Covid-19 virus, and this disruption is set to continue for at least 6 – 9 months. Most of Studio's autumn school groups of teenagers and young adults have cancelled or postponed their programmes until 2021, and as a consequence, the size of the school population is likely to be reduced by between 60 and 90%, compared to previous years.

Studio's priority when re-opening is to protect the health and well-being of staff and students. We have put together robust social distancing guidelines, based on advice from English UK and Public Health England, and will require all staff, students and hosts to adhere to these guidelines. This is important not only to prevent the spread of the virus, but also to protect the school, and individual hosts, from charges of negligence. Hosts and Studio staff need to demonstrate to students that they take the guidelines seriously, and that they are doing all they can to protect the health of the school community. If a student fell ill and felt that any parties involved had not followed these guidelines rigorously, they could take legal action against the host, or the school.

Host liability and insurance

Hosts should check that their insurance is up-to-date and consider their own liability in hosting students. You have a responsibility to reduce the risk of exposing your household, including your student, to Covid-19, through following Public Health guidelines, maintaining good hygiene at home, reporting any symptoms and reducing contact with others.

Risk

Each student placement could put you and your household at risk of exposure to Covid-19. Studio will survey all hosts in August 2020 and ask them to self-identify as at risk/ shielding. Studio will not place any students with hosts who are considered to be at risk, and will advise all students of the importance of hygiene and social distancing. Studio will not be able to police all student movements, however, and hosts therefore welcome students into their homes at their own risk. Studio will not be held liable if hosts are exposed to Covid-19 through hosting.

Students, social bubbles and the household

When a host agrees to welcome a student into their home, that student becomes part of the household, and of the host's social bubble, under the guidelines of Public Health England. This is important when considering the other rules and guidelines below.

Hosting students from other schools

It is very important that you minimize the contact that the household has with additional members of the public. Hosts **should not** accept students from any other schools while hosting a student from Studio Cambridge. If a host is found to be hosting students from other schools at the same time as a Studio student, they will be suspended as a Studio host.

Visitors to the home

Hosts should avoid large gatherings at their homes, following Public Health England and UK government guidelines, and are reminded that overnight guests are discouraged.

Quarantine and self-isolation

If a member of the household, either the student or the host family, exhibits symptoms of covid-19 (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>), the student or household member should contact NHS 111 to arrange a test (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youve-been-in-contact-with-a-person-who-has-coronavirus/>) and all other household members must self-isolate for 14 days. It is vital that hosts inform Studio Cambridge immediately if your student or any member of your household has covid-19 symptoms.

If any of your student's classmates exhibit symptoms, your student will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days at your house. You are not obliged to self-isolate in this instance. Please assist your student with self-isolation by bringing him/ her meals and clean linen, offering to collect prescriptions or do light shopping on his/ her behalf, and providing additional bin bags. You should not enter the student's bedroom, even to clean, at this time. If the student has to use a shared bathroom in the household, they should sanitise it before another household member uses it.

Local lockdowns

If the government reinstates lockdown regulations in Cambridge, or part of Cambridge, or at the school, all staff, students and hosts will be expected to comply with those regulations. If students are forced to remain at the homestay in quarantine, Studio will move from face-to-face classes to online classes.

Cleanliness and hygiene (see below also)

Hosts should revisit their cleaning routines during the pandemic, and approach home hygiene in 2 steps: cleaning (removing dirt, i.e. using a soapy sponge to wipe down kitchen counters) and sanitising (using chemicals, such as disinfectant, on highly-touched surfaces, such as light switches, door knobs, television remote controls, windowsills and handles, blind pulls, clothes hangers). It is particularly important to sanitise bedrooms after the departure of one student, and before the arrival of the next student.

Hosts are recommended to clean high-traffic areas in the house, such as shared bathrooms, as regularly as possible, and to leave cleaning products available, encouraging students to wipe down surfaces themselves after use.

Hosts should provide anti-bacterial handwash in bathrooms and in the kitchen and encourage students and all household members to use it regularly. Hosts are reminded of the government recommendation to wash hands for at least 20 second regularly.

Hosts are recommended to provide lined waste paper baskets or bins in student bedrooms for the hygienic disposal of used tissues.

Hosts are recommended to provide students with their own hand towel to avoid use of a communal hand towel in bathrooms or kitchen.

Toilets should be flushed with the lids down to prevent faecal-oral transmission.

In the event of a member of the household (host family, or student), exhibiting symptoms or testing positive for covid-19, hosts should follow the government advice on cleaning here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Students may be particularly concerned or anxious about home hygiene during the pandemic, and hosts should try to be sensitive to these concerns.

Single and twin bedrooms

Studio students should automatically be placed in single bedrooms during the Covid-19 pandemic, unless hosts are advised that a twin room is possible. In practice, twin rooms will only be offered to students coming from the same household, or to students travelling in the same group, who are also studying in the same class (this is to limit the mixing of social bubbles).

Wifi access

During the pandemic, priority will be given to hosts who can provide free wifi access in their homes. Students will be instructed to bring a laptop or tablet with them in order to access online lessons, in the event that they are forced to quarantine for some reason.

Flexibility

Hosts should be aware that flexibility (beyond the usual expectations) may be required during the pandemic. If a student is obliged to self-isolate at your house, you may be asked to provide weekday lunches, for an additional fee. If a student is obliged to stay on in the UK, due to cancelled flights/ closed borders / quarantine, you may be asked to continue hosting him or her, for an additional fee.

Cancellation policy

Studio will endeavour to give hosts at least 72 hours of notice if cancelling a student placement. However, in rare circumstances during this pandemic, such as the sudden closure of borders, or a student falling ill before travelling, it may be necessary to cancel a student at short notice. Studio also recognises that hosts may themselves exhibit symptoms or fall ill and need to cancel their student placements at short notice.

Travelling to and from the school

Students will be recommended to avoid using public transportation if possible, and to travel to and from school on foot or bicycle. Students will be informed of the requirement to wear face masks while using public transportation and asked to bring masks with them. If hosts are able to drive students to/ from school occasionally to avoid the use of public transportation, this would be of obvious benefit to the household.

Activities

The usual social programme provided to students will be limited during the pandemic, due to social distancing restrictions. Students may therefore spend more time at the homestay than usual, particularly at weekends. Hosts are encouraged to invite students to spend leisure time with them, watching television, playing board games, cooking together.

Inspections

Routine re- inspections of homestays will not be conducted in person during the pandemic, but instead will be conducted on Zoom (online), following British Council guidelines. Further information on this will be provided separately to hosts due inspections before December 2020. As the British Council still requires new hosts to be inspected in person, Studio will not recruit any new hosts in autumn 2020.

Communications and bookings

During the pandemic, Studio administrative staff may work from home, or on staggered shifts, to facilitate social distancing. Communication with hosts will be via email or text message, rather than phone call. Hosts should ensure

they check email accounts regularly, and should avoid coming to the school in person, as offices there may be closed.

Useful resources

Public Health England information on Covid-19 : <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

NHS:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

World Health Organisation:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Cleaning Guidelines (adapted from Air BnB)

Hosts should revisit their cleaning routines during the pandemic, and approach home hygiene in 2 steps: **cleaning** (removing dirt, i.e. using a soapy sponge to wipe down kitchen counters) and **sanitising** (using chemicals, such as disinfectant, on highly-touched surfaces, such as light switches, door knobs, television remote controls, windowsills and handles, blind pulls, clothes hangers). It is particularly important to sanitise bedrooms after the departure of one student, and before the arrival of the next student.

Before you start, consider your protective equipment. Do you need to wear disposable gloves, an apron or a face mask? Try not to touch your face while cleaning.

1. Remove the rubbish from the room you are cleaning. Line all rubbish bins/ waste paper baskets, as this makes it easier to dispose of tissues and personal waste.
2. Wash all linens and towels at the highest heat setting recommended by the manufacturer. Avoid shaking out dirty linens, which can increase the spread of germs.
3. Wash all dishes, glasses, mugs and cutlery in a dishwasher if you have one, or in the hottest water that you can use without causing injury.
4. Dust and sweep or vacuum floors. When dusting, start from the top of the furniture or shelving and work down.
5. Clean all hard surfaces, such as countertops, tables, sinks, showers, tubs, cabinets and floors, with hot, soapy water, and use bleach on the usual bathroom sanitaryware, such as toilets.
6. Clean all soft materials and furnishings following the manufacturer's instructions.
7. Sanitise (wipe with disinfectant) all frequently touched surfaces, such as

Door knobs and handles

Light switches

Remote controls

Tables and chairs

Fans

Lamps

Showers and bath tubs

Towel rails

Appliances

Kitchenware

Visitor book

Windowsills and handles

Keys

Rubbish bins and recycling bins (especially lids)

Refrigerator doors and handles

Toilets, especially seats, lids and flush handles

Toilet roll holder

Shower curtains, doors or screens

Sinks and taps

Salt and pepper shakers

Communal bottles of handsoap

8. Leave cleaning materials (such as antibacterial cleaning sprays, toilet bleach) available in the bathroom, and ask students to sanitise the room after their use.