



**Host Family Recruitment Policy
Abbey College Cambridge**

2021-22

Host Family Recruitment Policy



Host Family Recruitment Policy

SLT Responsible for this Policy: Helen Walker, Director of Boarding

Telephone: 01223 578280

Email: Helen.Walker@abbeycambridge.co.uk

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis		
Annual Policy reviewed by:	Helen Walker	June 2021
Approved by SLT and Published:		June 2020
Next Review:		June 2022

This policy has been approved by SLT and adopted on behalf of the Governors, and is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and is available on the school's portal. It is available to parents on request. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working, including when this involves being away from the school.

Host Family Recruitment Policy

The Abbey College Cambridge Safeguarding Statement:

‘Abbey College Cambridge is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.’

A decision is reached by a member of the Senior Leadership Team whether or not to recruit a host family to join Abbey College Cambridge.

Recruitment Process

The recruitment process for host families is in line with safer recruitment practise. It is important to start the process of recruiting and approving host families early and to ensure that the process is not rushed to ensure that all steps are followed.

Abbey College Cambridge take the host recruitment process very seriously, the process ensures that the host family know early in the process that Abbey College Cambridge will carry out background checks including criminal records checks (DBS) on all adults who have access to the house, and everyone in the household over the age of 16. This process safeguards both students and host families. The length of the recruitment process also provides time for the host family to confirm their commitment to hosting students for Abbey College Cambridge. Any host family who withdraws from the recruitment process at any time in the process will not be chased by Abbey College Cambridge.

When recruiting for host families, two approaches are taken;

1. Recruiting via advertisements
2. Recruiting via a recommendation

Advertisements contain the Abbey College Cambridge safeguarding statement as set out above. Families who reply to the advert or who are recommended, are sent a new host family information pack which comprises;

- Letter of introduction explaining who Abbey College Cambridge are
- Sample host family handbook
- Sample host family agreement
- Host family application form
- Host family recruitment policy

Application Process

The host family application form is to be completed and returned if the host family want to go ahead with applying to be an Abbey College Cambridge host family. The application form asks applicants to sign a declaration about convictions or offenses.

Upon receipt of the host application form, the form is reviewed by the Vice Principal Pastoral and the Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment and Student Enrolment. If after reviewing the application responses are deemed satisfactory, an appointment will be made to visit the family at home. The Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment will assess the house and the family for their suitability in hosting Abbey College Cambridge students, and

Host Family Recruitment Policy

will consider issues relevant to the students' safety, ability to study and comfort. The Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment will use a checklist to assist in this, and will record all findings for review. The Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment will meet all members of the host family and will see the whole house, including the possible student bedrooms and the bathrooms. It is essential that the Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment meets all adult members of the family, during the initial visit.

Following the inspection, the Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment completes an assessment of the host family, writing up the inspection checklist. The Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment may arrange one or more follow up visits in order to make an informed decision and in order to ensure all members of the family are met with. Following the house visit, the application is reviewed by the Vice Principal Pastoral and the Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment. The host family is at this stage informed that their application for becoming a host family is either approved or that their application is unsuccessful. The Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment will write to the family advising of the outcome either way and where necessary outline the next steps.

DBS and Criminal Record Checks

Once a family is approved following an inspection, they will undergo a criminal records check. DBS forms will be completed online by all adults with access to the house as well as everyone over the age of 16. The Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment will set the application up online with log in details sent to the email address of each person aged 16 or over. Each applicant for a DBS check should make an appointment at school as soon as they are approved as being a suitable host family, at which time they should present their identification documents. The host families' identity should be checked against their photo ID and proof of their right to work in the UK should be obtained where necessary.

Reference Requests

References will be requested once the DBS process has begun with each member of the household aged 16 plus providing the names of two referees. It is essential that the referees are written to, and their reference is authenticated by a follow up phone call.

Until the result of the DBS check is known and references are obtained, no students will be placed with the host family.

Once the DBS check is complete and references are obtained, the host family application will be discussed with the Director of Boarding or another member of the SLT for final approval.

Following the decision of the Director of Boarding/SLT, the host family will be written to and advised of the decision. The whole process from initial application to approval, can take up to six weeks.

Training and Support

Once approved, Child Protection training will be booked with an online link provided by the HR Officer. This training is compulsory for all adult members of the host family. This must be completed and successfully passed before students can be placed.

Host Family Recruitment Policy

Each member of the host family should bring their DBS certificate into Abbey College Cambridge as soon as it is received. Students cannot be placed with the family until all DBS certificates are received and approved. If concerns are raised on the DBS certificate, Abbey College Cambridge reserves the right to reject the host family application.

Host families will be sent copies and or links of the following documents and will sign to confirm these are read and understood;

- Lodging host Family Handbook (printed copy)
- Abbey College Cambridge Safeguarding Policy (printed copy)
- Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (printed copy)
- Abbey College Cambridge Staff Code of Conduct (printed copy)
- Latest host family agreement

Host families will also receive two copies of the Host Family Agreement, one to keep and one to sign and return to the Head of Accommodation and Student Enrolment.