

Oxford Spires Language International is committed to the welfare of all children using its services. The following procedures are in place for the recruitment of Host families to ensure all Host families coming into contact with children are fully checked and are deemed suitable.

We use a variety of different homestay providers in Oxford & Cheltenham and therefore have an agreement in place for the following procedures to be adhered to:

Host families are recruited using the following procedures:

- Completion of an application form / enquiry form to be completed
- Candidates take part in a face to face interview / visit by Host family organiser at the homestay's accommodation
- Candidates will be required to have an enhanced DBS disclosure.
- Following British Council guidelines, these circumstances would be:
 1. The level of the existing DBS check is the same level needed by Oxford Spires
 2. The DBS check is less than 12 months' old
 3. The existing DBS check is for a similar post
 4. There are no unexplained gaps in a person's employment – a DBS check will not be used if there has been a break of more than three months in service
 5. The person's identity has been checked to ensure it matches the DBS check
 6. The existing check has been done with an organisation known to Oxford Spires which demonstrates safe recruitment procedures and who is able to confirm the status of the DBS is still correct to their knowledge
 7. Oxford Spires will ask to see the original DBS check
 8. Have a Gas Safety Certificate in place for their home
 9. Family and environment deemed suitable to host student's / group leaders
- In line with the DBS code of practice, we do not retain the DBS disclosure itself but will keep a record of its number and issue date. Only Host family's members themselves will keep a copy of their own DBS disclosure
- In line with Ofsted's guidelines, it is our policy not to routinely repeat DBS checks unless there is a break in employment or we are given information that suggests a person may no longer be suitable to look after children. However, we do currently aim to ensure each member of Host families has a DBS disclosure no more than three years old.
- Wherever possible, Oxford Spires will use the new DBS on-line updating service to check the status of Host families' DBS checks and we encourage all new Host families to subscribe to this
- All Host families are required to sign a Host Families Suitability declaration annually
- All appointments of Host families that maybe subject to the receipt of satisfactory references – we request these in writing from two referees
- Unless agreed prior to arrival between Oxford Spires and the Groups or parent, no adult to share the same house unless we have written permission form the parents or it is the child's parent
- No more than four students per host family unless it is agreed prior to arrival
- A minimum student age of 12 years old for students choosing host family accommodation

