

SWINDON SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

Student Information Handbook

**Updated:
April 2016
October 2018**

Introduction

The student handbook has been prepared to provide you with information about studying at Swindon School of English and living in the local area.

As school director I am very pleased to welcome you as a student at Swindon School of English. I am the person responsible for the implementation and administration of all aspects of the school programme. Any student who has any questions or queries about school matters can discuss them with me. If I am not available please see your class teacher.

I am also responsible for the safety and welfare of the students. Please feel free to contact me if you are experiencing any problems. The 24 hour mobile number is given below.



Robert Moyse Director

Contact information:

School telephone: 01793 335098
Mobile telephone: 07910143257 (**24 Hour**)
Email: info@swindonenglish.co.uk

Fire Procedures

On Discovering a Fire

01 Operate the nearest fire alarm (break glass call point). These are located outside the male and female toilets in the staircase, next to the fire door in Room 5 and on the ground floor next to the main entrance.



02 Leave the building by the nearest exit. Floor plans and fire exit information is displayed in every classroom and on the notice board in the reception area. Students should take note of this information.

03 Report to the fire assembly point (in front of the King's Hotel in Wood Street). Remain at the designated Assembly point until you receive further instructions. DO NOT re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so by the Fire Brigade.

03 DO NOT ATTEMPT TO TACKLE THE FIRE OR STOP TO COLLECT PERSONAL BELONGINGS.

04 REMAIN CALM AND DO NOT RUN.

Know...

01 On occasions, there will be false alarms or alarm testing. However, you must treat all activations as a real fire. If you do not evacuate the building, you may be risking the lives of others.

02 Please note that it is an offence to set off the fire alarm without cause, or to fail to leave the building when the alarm sounds.

Accidents and Emergency Procedures

Injuries and accidents at school:

01 When an injury or accident takes place within the school, contact a member of staff for First Aid assistance. You should explain the location of the accident and the nature of the injury and whether an ambulance is definitely required. The names of the qualified first aiders are displayed on the notice board in the reception area.

02 On reaching the casualty, the First Aider will assess the situation and make a decision as to any medical treatment and/or requirement for an ambulance (if not previously called). It is the responsibility of Swindon School of English to contact the emergency services and the student's emergency contact (as recorded on the enrolment form).

03 Following the treatment of the injured person(s) an Accident Report Form is completed. Where a student is required to visit Hospital, a member of staff will attend in cases where the injured party requests it or the Director advises so.

Emergency Services:

The **emergency services** are the **POLICE, AMBULANCE** and **FIRE SERVICE**.

In an emergency you should telephone **999** and ask for the appropriate service.

Calling 999 is free of charge. The person taking your call will ask you questions to try to assess the situation. Try to answer the questions as calmly and fully as possible. Please do not be afraid to call the police if you feel you are in danger.

For other police enquires, contact Wiltshire Police on 0845 408 7000 or www.wiltshire.police.uk

Safety:

Swindon is a relatively safe town and you should feel able to go out and about without fear. However, as in most countries, you must use your common sense and be aware of your surroundings, particularly at night. The British Council booklet *Safety First, A Personal Guide for International Students* can be downloaded from <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/safety-first.pdf>

NHS, Doctors, Dentists and Prescriptions

Students should advise Swindon School of English of any medication they are currently taking or of any relevant medical conditions.

Swindon School of English will take appropriate action in the event of a medical emergency but the student will be responsible for any medical bills incurred. If you need to see a doctor, you may be charged for this (depending on government reciprocal agreements). If you need hospitalization, you will be treated at a NHS hospital but again charges may apply.

What NHS services are provide free of charge?

If you are entitled to NHS treatment, the following services should be free of charge:

- Consulting a GP (e.g. visiting a clinic).
- Emergency and non-emergency treatment in a hospital.

What NHS services might I need to pay for?

Even if you are entitled to NHS treatment there are some services you might still be required to pay for:

- Medicines prescribed by GP.
- Dental treatment.
- Optical treatment.

Doctors:

If you need help to find a doctor, please contact the Director or another member of staff. We can arrange an appointment for you as a "Temporary Resident". The nearest doctor's surgeries to the school are:

The Hermitage Surgery, Dammas Lane, Old Town, Swindon Wiltshire, SN13EF. Phone: 01793 522492.
<https://hermitage.gpsurgery.net/>

Victoria Cross Surgery, 168-169 Victoria Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN13BU. Phone: 01793 535584
<http://www.victoriacrosssurgery.co.uk/>

Nearest Hospital:

The Great Western Hospital, Marlborough Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 6BB Tel: 01793 604020
Web: <https://www.gwh.nhs.uk/>

Healthcare without an appointment:

Call NHS 111: When you need advice or to see a GP out of hours. The NHS 111 service is for when you need urgent care but it's not a 999 emergency. It's available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Walk in to Swindon NHS Health Centre: 8am to 6pm, 7 days a week, including bank holidays. You do not need to be registered with a GP.
Islington Street, Swindon SN1 2DQ. Phone: 01793 607890.

Visit the Urgent Care Centre: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
The Great Western Hospital, Marlborough Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 6BB.

Ask a pharmacist: Get advice if you start to feel unwell. The nearest pharmacy to the school is:
Boots, 35 Wood St, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 4AN.

Emergency Dental Treatment:

If you are **not** registered with an NHS dentist, then please phone the **Wiltshire Dental Helpline** (Monday-Friday 8.30am-5.00pm).

If you are registered with an NHS dentist, then please call them first, as they will have their own process for providing urgent care.

Urgent out of hours dental treatment: Outside of the hours mentioned above, please call 111.

More serious problems: Please go to the Emergency Department or call 999 immediately if you experience any of the following: Uncontrollable bleeding following dental extractions, rapidly increasing swelling around the throat or eye, severe trauma to the face and jaws.

Laws

The laws in the UK may be different from those in your home country. This especially applies to the use of tobacco, alcohol and self-defence sprays. You must not carry drugs with you of any kind (unless prescribed by a doctor), or use any illegal drugs. It is illegal to carry any sort of weapon. You must be 18 and over to buy tobacco and alcohol.

Electricity

The British electricity supply works on 240 volts / 50 cycles so if you are bringing any electrical goods with you, please make sure you can use them safely on this voltage or use a transformer. Most buildings have sockets for 13 amp square pin fused plugs. A 3 amp fuse (red) is needed for stereo equipment, clocks etc and a 13 amp fuse (brown) for heavier domestic equipment such as hairdryers. Adaptors for plugs are sold at most electricity shops and large department stores.

Money

Britain's decimal currency is based on the pound sterling (£) which is divided into one hundred pence (100p). Coins are issued up to and including the value of £2.00 (1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p, 50p, £1.00, £2.00). Notes are issued up to and including the value of £5, £10, £20, £50, and £100.

Religion in Swindon

According to the 2011 census, the religious make up of Swindon is 57.5% Christian, 30.5% No religion, 1.7% Muslim, 1.2% Hindu, 0.6% Sikh, 0.6% Buddhist, 0.1% Jewish, 0.1% Atheist. As well as many Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, Swindon has a Hindu temple and a Mosque.

Classes

In our General English classes you will:

Develop your confidence when speaking English. Fluency and pronunciation are high on our list of teaching priorities. Our aim is to improve your all-round language ability and help you to communicate more fluently and effectively in English. You will improve your awareness of English grammar and extend your vocabulary. You will practice listening, reading, writing and speaking English through a wide variety of learning activities.

Lesson times:

Mornings 09.30 – 12.30 (Monday to Friday)

Maximum class size: 14 students

Assessment and progress

Assessment and monitoring of your progress are important from the very start of your course. This includes ensuring you are placed in the correct group for your level at the start of your course, checking the progress you are making and finally giving you your certificate showing the outcome of your studies.

We use the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)** as our standard for assessing your level and monitoring your progress.

Each level, A1 – C2, describes your ability to do certain things in English, from very basic (I can buy a meal in a fast-food restaurant) to extremely advanced (I can write long, complex reports). These are known as the 'can-do' statements and cover all skills and different reasons for learning English – social, work and study.

More information is available from reception.

Pre-course assessment

Before you start your course, we will ask you to complete an online assessment test which will give us the first idea of your level. We'll also ask you to complete a short questionnaire and write something about your job/course of study and why learning English will help you in this. If you feel an assessment of your speaking level would be helpful, we'll can arrange a time to do this online or in person before the start of your course.

Start of the course

During your first week we'll check with you to see that you are comfortable and happy in your group. At this point, we'll be able to get a much better idea of your real level, and will be able to produce your Student Profile. This combines all the information we have about your past experience with English, your current and future aims, and your skill levels according to the CEFR.

During your course

On a monthly basis, we update your Profile, and check that your learning is progressing satisfactorily. This will be done in an one to one tutorial with your teacher. Homework is an important part of your course and we include this in the monitoring process. We will also carry out regular testing. We try to relate your progress directly to the CEFR and the can-do statements.

End of your course

You will receive an Attendance Certificate showing your levels in the four skills and a written report if you require one.

Attendance and punctuality policy

You are encouraged to attend all the lessons they have paid for and to arrive on time for classes. However, we understand that you have various other responsibilities in your daily lives that sometimes make attendance and punctuality difficult.

If you are unable to attend for any reason, we appreciate it if you inform us in advance if possible. This will allow us to reschedule your lessons for a later date so that you do not lose them. We can only do this if you advise us in advance with a genuine reason for non attendance.

Any unauthorised absences to lessons will count towards your attendance record. Students with less than 80% attendance will not receive an end of course certificate.

We also appreciate it if, where possible, you can advise us if you are going to be late for class for any reason. When arriving late, students are requested to take their seats in the classroom quietly in order not to cause any unnecessary disruption to the class.

If you are absent for more than three consecutive lessons without informing us, we will attempt to contact you in order to find out the reason for the absence and address any problems that may have arisen.

Library

The nearest libraries to the school are:

Old Town Library, Swindon Arts Centre, 6 Devizes Rd, Swindon SN1 4BJ

Tuesday to Friday: 11.00am - 4.30pm

Saturday: 10.00am - 1.00pm

Swindon Central Library, Regent Circus, Swindon SN1 1QG

Monday to Friday: 10.00am - 5.30pm

Saturday: 10.00am - 4.00pm

Sunday 11.00am - 3.00pm

Computer and Internet Access

Wi-Fi is available in the school. Connection details are provided on the notice board in the reception area.

Smoking

In the UK, It is illegal to smoke in enclosed public places (such as shopping centres, hospitals, cinemas, theatres, pubs, clubs, restaurants) in outdoor eating areas, unless in a designated smoking area in a licensed premises.

The minimum age to purchase and consume tobacco products in public is 18 years of age. There is no stated age under which it is illegal to consume tobacco, although an officer has the right to confiscate tobacco if the individual concerned is in a public place and under sixteen years of age.

Swindon School of English has a NO SMOKING POLICY. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building, including the toilets and the area in front of the front entrance. This NO SMOKING POLICY extends to vaping which is also prohibited in unauthorised areas.

Complaints Procedure

Informal

It is hoped that any complaints about teaching-related or service-related provision at Swindon School of English can be dealt with by discussing the issue informally with a member of staff. If students wish to complain, they should not hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

Formal

If students feel that they need to make a more formal complaint, they should complete a complaints form (available from reception). The completed complaints form should then be forwarded to the Director of Operations.

The Director will acknowledge receipt of the form and take steps to resolve any issues within five working days.

Abusive Behaviour Policy

Abusive behaviour including physical and verbal abuse, bullying, flagrant misconduct, criminal acts and deliberate damage to school property will not be tolerated as all students and employees of Swindon School of English have a right to expect that their school is a safe place in which to work and learn.

We are here to ensure that your time is a safe and enjoyable one! We are available to offer support advice and guidance to all students and to ensure that you are happy in your studies so please don't hesitate to ask us if you need help.

Action to be taken if an incident occurs:

Step 1: Incident report

If an incident involving abusive behaviour does occur then please report this to the director as soon as possible. The Director will then speak privately to the person or persons perpetrating such an incident at the earliest opportunity.

If it is found that the act of abusive behaviour has taken place, it will be put to the person that such behaviour is unacceptable and an assurance will be sought that such an incident will not be repeated. It will be stressed on this occasion that repetition of such an incident will result in further more serious action being taken.

The person or persons perpetrating the incident will then receive a **written warning** informing them that this conduct is unacceptable.

We reserve the right to expel a student immediately without written warning in the case of occurrence of extreme abusive behaviour.

If a second incident occurs involving the same person, Swindon School of English will have no option but to **expel** the person from the school. Students will be held personally financially responsible for rectifying any wilful damage to School property or personnel in the case of such misconduct. Students who are expelled from school will not be entitled to any refund of fees.

Notes:

In the case of the occurrence of criminal acts, Swindon School of English will have no option but to involve the local authority and/or the police.

If following a decision to ban a person from the school premises, that person nevertheless persists in entering school premises and causes a nuisance or disturbance, such a person may be removed from the school premises as a trespasser and prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996. They may also be charged with an offence under the Public Order Act 1986 or other such legislation.

Police involvement would make reference to the Public Order Act 1986.

Swindon Information

Swindon is an industrial and service town in the county of Wiltshire in the west of England. The town is an important centre for industrial heritage. In 1841, Brunel's Swindon Works were built for the construction of locomotives on the Great Western Railway (GWR). It became the town's largest employer and one of the biggest in the country, employing more than 14,500 workers. The works closed down in 1986. Today, one of the biggest attractions for visitors is the Steam Railway Museum.

STEAM - Museum of the Great Western Railway

Fire Fly Avenue, Swindon SN2 2EY

01793 466646

Email enquiries:steammuseum@swindon.gov.uk

The McArthur Glen Designer Outlet, an indoor shopping mall for reduced price goods (mainly clothing) also uses the buildings of the disused railway engine works. The centre has around 100 shops and is the biggest covered designer outlet in Europe.

McArthur Glen Designer Outlet

Kemble Dr, Swindon SN2 2DY

Swindon has many beautiful parks and green spaces, the best of which are Lydiard Country Park, The Lawns, Stanton Park, Queens Park, Town Gardens and Coate Water.

For entertainment, there are many restaurants, bars and nightclubs, cinemas and theatres.

Cineworld Cinema - Swindon Regent Circus, 11 Victoria Road, Swindon SN1 1FA

Multiplex cinema chain showing the latest international blockbusters in 2D and 3D formats.

Empire Cinemas & IMAX - Greenbridge Retail & Leisure Park, Drakes Way, Swindon SN3 3SQ

Multiscreen cinema for major releases

Cineworld Cinema - Whitehill Way, Whitehill Way, Swindon SN5 7DN

Cinema chain with a mainstream programme

Wyvern Theatre - Theatre Square, Swindon SN1 1QN

Performing arts theatre, Dance, comedy, drama and music venue with a 635-seat auditorium plus 2 bars, one with pre-show food.

Swindon Arts Centre - Devizes Rd, Swindon SN1 4BJ

Performing arts theatre. Venue for major names in music, family shows, dance, comedy and exhibitions, plus local workshops.

The Shoebox Theatre - Theatre Square, Swindon SN1 1QN

A 50 seat flexible studio space managed by Wrong Shoes Theatre Company.

The space supports new and contemporary work, hosts an exciting programme of contemporary theatre and provides quality theatre training.

Richard Jefferies Museum - Marlborough Road, Coate, Swindon SN3 6AA

The museum organises as wide a variety as possible, to suit as many different people as possible.

Everything from the inspiration that Swindon born writer Richard Jefferies has left behind: a passion for writing and the arts in general, a love and never-ending fascination of the local countryside, and a powerful interest and optimistic belief in society. Not to mention a fantastic old farmhouse with gardens and outbuildings, and a rich Victorian agricultural history.

For sports there is The Oasis (fun pool and domebusters), The Link (Ice skating, Swimming and climbing wall) and The Health Hydro (Swimming and Turkish baths).

Transport information

TRAINS

From Swindon station there are frequent direct train services to various destinations including London Paddington (60 minutes), Bristol (45 minutes), Bath (30 minutes) and Cheltenham (50 minutes)

Trains in the region are operated by **Great Western Trains** (www.gwr.com/)

Swindon train station is at: **Station Rd, Swindon SN1 1DQ**

BUSES

Buses in the Swindon urban area are operated by **Swindon Bus** and **Stagecoach**.

Various weekly and monthly passes are available. Information can be found at:
www.thamesdown-transport.co.uk/

For buses to other towns and cities, services are operated from Swindon by **National Express** and **Megabus**. Information can be found at:

www.nationalexpress.com/en

<https://uk.megabus.com/>

For services to Oxford, there is the **Stagecoach 66** service:

www.stagecoachbus.com/tickets

Most urban area buses leave from the bus stands on **Fleming Way**.

Swindon bus station is at: **New Bridge Cl, Swindon SN1 1DX**

TAXIS

Swindon has many taxi companies including:

M4 Swindon Taxis, 17 Falmouth Grove 01793 205800

SN1 Radio Cars, 5, Caen View 01793 523523

United Radio Cars, Transfer Bridge Industrial Estate, County Rd 01793 611111

V Cars Unit 1, Hargreaves Rd, 01793 701701

Black Cab Co, Corporate office, 12a, Bramble Rd 01793 430999

Map

Our address is:

Second Floor, 3 -5 Wood Steet, Old Town, Swindon SN1 4AN.

