

Families and Students Living Off Campus Guide

2024 - 2025

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1. Introduction

This document aims to provide a quick guide for families and students living off campus to help you settle into College life. Many families and students living off campus (FLOCs) arrive in the area before the College term begins to settle into the local environment and children into schools. Further details for many of the topics covered in this booklet can be found in the Student Handbook; also your Barnabas, or the Families representative (from the Student Committee) will be happy to help you.

This booklet is divided in four parts. The first part is about College life and important information about people and procedures for families and students living off-site. The second is practical information outside the College. The third part is an alphabetic list of various aspects of College life, locations, events etc. The last part covers financial benefits you can explore.

Enjoy reading and do feel free to ask questions of the family/off-site student reps! You are more than welcome.

2. College life

a. Key Staff for families and students living off campus

There are many staff around to help you settle in and find your way around. If you need to find faces to the names, please check the picture board in Maple Hall (our multi-purpose dining and community worship venue). Here we highlight a few key roles useful for you to know in the first weeks at All Nations, and their main responsibilities

Head of Operations:

1. Managing the College's non-academic operations.
2. Any issues regarding safeguarding or health & safety (including FIRE issues)

Housekeeper:

1. General housekeeping
2. Any questions about accommodation, utilities, use of site
3. Any question about food, linen, furniture, cleaning
4. Room bookings for guests
5. Chores, maintenance and Maple Hall issues

Administrative Assistant:

1. Registering your family at the doctor's surgery
2. If you need a letter to prove you are a student for any reason
3. Any problems with your key 'fob'

b. The Student Committee

The Student Committee operates throughout the year on a rotation basis, and manages many of the routine activities and events of the College. The Student Committee is led by head students. The other positions are treasurer, secretary, transport rep, kitchen rep, cleaning rep and (important for families/students living off site) the family and FLOCs reps. Normally all Student Committee members are around a few days before term starts.

There are many more roles that are filled by students and many 'reps' – check the full list on the notice board in Maple Hall. Families are encouraged to take one of the roles, please check and see which positions match your skills.

The College also runs a Barnabas scheme. This scheme links new students with a returning student so that everyone has someone who can support them as they learn how life at College works. The Student Committee will let you know who your Barnabas is as soon as College starts (unless you have already been connected with them beforehand).

c. Signing in & out of College

For fire and security reasons it is important for us to be able to account for everyone on site at any particular time. There are two means of recording this for families and students living off-campus: there is a **signing in book** and for full-board families and other students living on campus, there is a **signing out book**. Both books are located at the bottom of the stairs opposite the Prayer room. Please read the table below to be sure of what to do. **Please note if you have guests coming to College they should sign in and out at reception for the same fire and security reasons.**

Accommodation	Signing in & out
Stables Flats Coach House Beech Mews Oak House (3 floors) Guest flat Easneye House	If both adults leave site they should sign out and back in using the signing out book. If only one adult leaves the site then the remaining adult can account for the one off site in the case of a fire incident.
Oak Tree Cottages 1,2,3	You should sign in and out using the FLOC book
Students living at home and just staying a few nights a week at College;	You should sign in and out using the FLOC book
Students living in their own or rented accommodation locally or further afield.	You should always sign in and out using the FLOC book

d. Chores and maintenance for families and students living off campus

The table below provides a rough guide to chores for families and students living off campus, however it is subject to change as the student cohort changes each term:

	Students living off-site	Full-board families	MA off-site students
Wash-up or meal serve (lunch/dinner time)	1 time each term	Every other week	3 times each term
Weekend chores	-	Every other week	-
Maple Hall cleaning	1 time each term	1 time each term	1 time each term
Maintenance	2 times each term	3 x (3hrs) per term	-
End of term chores	End of each term	Sat am end of each term (2hrs)	End of each term

Wash-up duty

If you are on wash-up duty please finish your lunch and be ready to wash-up by 13.20. You are

able to go to lunch early and jump queue in order to make sure you get your meal in time. Check the notice board in the dining room or FLOCs notice board to see when you are on wash-up. If you are on meal serve, please arrive 5 minutes before the start of the meal. **EVERYONE** working in the kitchen **MUST** wear closed shoes – no sandals or flip-flops are allowed.

Maple Hall cleaning

Everyone is expected to clean the Maple Hall (dining room) at least once a term. It will take 2 people approximately 2 hours in an afternoon to do this. Per week this is done 3 or 4 times. Check the maintenance notice board in the dining room to see when you are on duty.

Maintenance

'Maintenance' is a slot of 2 hours 15 minutes work in one afternoon. Check the maintenance notice board in the dining room to see when you are on duty. Please see the Housekeeper if you need to change for any reason. She is very flexible in changing the person (husband/wife), day and time and work to do as long as you discuss this with her in advance!

Everyone is expected to be part of the end of term chores on the Saturday morning. For families, only one spouse is expected to help. You will be able to leave from lunchtime on the Saturday.

Apart from the above duties you are free to sign up for any 'rep' position you like and believe you have the right skills for. At the moment the bicycle rep, transport rep and sports rep are in great need of some extra support and these would be great tasks for families to help in. Please consider carefully and let anybody in the student committee know if you are interested.

3. Life outside All Nations

a. Introduction

There is a wide variety of villages, cities, forests, parks and other places of interest around. We have chosen a small selection here for you to learn about.

The closest village in walking distance to All Nations is Stanstead Abbots (20 min.). Ware is the second (45 min.), a bigger town with more shops and facilities. Since Ware is the place where you will probably end up most of the time, we have extended the information for Ware. Harlow and Hertford are the closest large towns. For maps of the locations and details of these places, see the FLOCs notice board.

Getting to these places if you do not have a car:

1. Your legs (it is possible to walk to Stanstead Abbots and Ware if you are a good walker)
2. Bicycles from the College
3. Carpooling with other students who do own a car, or in the College car
4. Joining in the College minibus that has a Tesco (supermarket) trip to Ware each week
5. Public transport to the nearby village is not easy to find. To travel to London however, is very easy by taking the train from St. Margarets station.

Stanstead Abbots

All Nations is situated just 20 minutes' walk from **Stanstead Abbots & St Margarets**. Facilities here include a Co-op supermarket, Post Office, train station, hairdressers, dentist, newsagents, pubs and restaurants. There are nice walks along the river and canal and there is a small playground for kids behind the car park, off the high street. Between St Margaret's and Ware is Van Hage's garden centre which, in addition to selling plants, has a great coffee shop, a small animal area, and a mini train.

Ware is it?

Yes, a cliché you will hear for as long as you live here! Ware has an online portal, www.wareonline.co.uk, where most of the information below is gleaned from. This list is not comprehensive, but serves as a quick-reference for any urgent needs.

At the west, north-west end of the High Street, the road curves northwards and becomes Baldock Street. Although you would never know it!

The High Street has limited parking, as does Church Street. Parking is available in four main lots. There are three pay areas and the free for 3 hours Tesco parking lot. Pay and display is in use at all the pay lots. Here is a quick overview of things to buy and do in Ware:

Brand Stores	Tescos and Sainsburys, not superstores, but enough to keep the fridge full. Boots, a small dispensary/pharmacy with a good range of necessities.
Charity shops	There are several charity shops in Ware, most of which are on the high street. Books, clothing, DVDs and a lot of other second hand goods to be had at low prices.
Food	Subway, China Red, Tops Pizza (they do deliveries), Sala Thai, Milady (specialist café and bakery), Simmons Bakery, Sfzios (Italian) and Truly Scrumptious. There are also many pubs providing snacks and meals – let us know which you find to be the best!
Fuel	The nearest garage is on Widbury Hill Road, there are others located on London Road and the Rush Green filling station at the A10/A414 roundabout. Prices vary so it's worth shopping around and going further afield.
Library; Books	It is free to join the library and then you can use any library in Hertfordshire, including the archives. Ware library is not very large, but has good stock of children books. You will need a letter from the College to confirm you are a student. Western Front Books is a second-hand book store on the High Street.
Nature Reserve	The closest reserve to College is the Amwell Nature Reserve on the Lea River which runs across the road from the campus. There are hides for viewing birdlife and dragonfly communities.
Sports activities	Wodson Sports Centre offers a gym, and a range of indoor and outdoor sports facilities. For indoor swimming, check out the John Warner Sports Centre in nearby Hoddesdon town.
Vehicles	There are some garages in Ware that can conduct MOTs and do repair work to most cars. Cross Autos is near the garage on Widbury Hill, while other establishments are found on the A602 west of the large roundabout in west Ware. (Kwik Fit, Halfords are found in nearby Hertford.)

Harlow

is the nearest big shopping town. Here you can find all the major supermarkets like Asda, Sainsbury, Tesco, Lidl as well as many high street shops. If you park at the Water Gardens car park next to Asda you can get your car parking fee reimbursed if you shop in Asda. It is also fairly central for all the main shops, including the nearby Harvey Centre. As well as many sports facilities and an indoor swimming pool, there are also out-of-town shopping parks with a wide range of stores, and a cinema. Harlow also has a hospital with A&E, and a great town park with a pets corner.

Hertford

is also nearby and has a lot more character than Harlow. It has a Tesco, Sainsburys, and Boots, an organic farm shop and a market every Saturday, as well as some great charity shops, and many independent stores. It is easily accessible via train (Hertford East station is two stops on from St Margarets in Stanstead Abbots) and has many restaurants and a fantastic park with an indoor swimming pool and lots of open space to play, cycle and walk!

b. Doctor, A&E, Dentist

Doctor

In the UK you need to register with a doctor's surgery to be seen by a GP (general practitioner) outside of the accident and emergency department of a hospital. Do therefore register on arrival. Use this online registration form: <https://www.dolphinhousesurgery.co.uk/navigator/new-patient-registration/>

Temporary patients (those resident for 6 months or less) can register through the following link: <https://www.dolphinhousesurgery.co.uk/practice-information/temporary-patient-registration/>

You will need to complete one form for each person in your family. You will not be able to register until you are living onsite at College. The contact details can be found below.

Dolphin House Surgery

Burgage Lane
Ware
Hertfordshire SG12 9FT
Telephone: 01920 468777

Accidents & Emergency (A&E)

If an emergency situation occurs the closest location to go to is the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow. Once you enter Harlow on the A414 the A&E Hospital is very well signposted.

Princess Alexandra Hospital

Hamstel Road
Harlow
Essex CM20 1QX

Dentist

In the UK all dental practices are now private commercial practices. If you are happy to pay for private dental treatment then you can book an appointment as and when needed. Some of the private dental practices will still take you as a National Health Service (NHS) patient if you have an NHS exemption card. There can be a delay when registering as an NHS patient so it is good to get your name down on the list as soon as you arrive.

Stanstead Abbots Dental Practice

17 High Street

Stanstead Abbots

Herts

Telephone: 01920 877745

Opening a bank account (for international students)

There is a selection of banks in the area you can apply to for a bank account.

The following site outlines which documents you will need to open different bank accounts and is useful in guiding you on the best bank to join depending on your circumstances.

<https://www.savesthestudent.org/international-students/top-international-bank-accounts-uk.html>

4. Family Life/Students living off campus (alphabetized)

Some important bits of College life to know about.

Amenities Fee & Meals

(Only relevant for students not paying for full board accommodation)

All students not living in College accommodation but who are coming onsite for their studies will need to pay the Amenities Fee. The fee includes access to all student areas of the site including the library, and includes lunches and drinks Monday-Friday during the 10-week Undergraduate terms. Details and prices can be found on the Amenities Fee Summary on the website and on the Finance board in the Ash Centre. Please see the finance department if you have any questions. Whether you are here all week or just for a few days each week all students should book their lunches with the Catering Team.

The kitchen should be notified of any changes 48 hours in advance. This can be done by using forms that you will find at the Maple Hall Notice Board. Look out for the different coloured forms depending on whether you are cancelling a meal or requesting an additional one (either for yourself or if you have family or guests coming to stay).

If you want to bring sandwiches or a meal in to College to eat in the dining room with other students this is absolutely fine, however the Amenities Fee is still payable. There are microwaves in the dining room where you can heat up food.

Babysitting

Families often find themselves able to make private arrangements with other families or single students to babysit their children; these arrangements are made at parents' own risk.

Bargain Boutique

Here you can find freebies (clothes etc)! Situated on the ground floor of Easneye House, accessed from the courtyard.

Barnabas

Each new student is linked to a returning student who will help you settle into All Nations life.

Bikes

The College has a bike shed where you can lock up your bike in the dry. The College also has bikes which you can borrow, please check with the bike rep/Student Committee for details.

Books and play areas for children

The College has a selection of books for children spread across two rooms/lounges where children can play. There is also a designated play area with a trampoline, swing set and sandpit, as well as a large football field.

Car seats for children

In the UK the laws are strict about car seats for children. If you are not sure what the requirements are, ask in reception for a brochure.

Children & Maple Hall

Parents with young children are allowed to queue-jump (this is quite rare in British culture!) and go to the front of the queue for meals. The only other time you can do this is when you are on wash-up duty.

If you do have young children, please note they are not allowed in the food serving area of the dining room or the kitchen. People are carrying hot drinks and hot food in this area and it gets very congested when 120 people arrive at the same time for lunch or dinner. So if you have a young family please arrive up to 10 minutes early for meals and settle the family at a table before you collect the food.

Church & project placements

As part of your personal development programme at College you will be expected to worship at a local church. If you are at College for a year you will also be expected to join in a ministry either with a local church or a ministry project. For students living off campus, finding an appropriate local church link and ministry placement can be more complicated. The Practical Ministries Coordinator will be very happy for you to contact them about this before term starts if you wish.

Cubby Holes

These are in the Ash Centre next to the FLOCs notice board. You will be allocated a cubby hole for you to store your personal belongings in.

Drying Room

If you do not like to use the tumble dryer or have no space outside: there is a big room in the basement to dry your clothes.

Guests

All guests have to sign in and out of College in the reception and wear a badge at all times. If you host your guests in your own accommodation there is no fee. If you want to use one of the available guest rooms, you'll need to inform our Housekeeper in advance and pay for the accommodation, according to the number of persons and stay duration.

Your guests are welcome to attend lectures with you, but please note that permission should be sought from the lecturer 24 hours in advance, since some lecture content may be inappropriate for guest attendees. Also, visitors are only permitted to attend one hour of lectures free of charge. Those wishing to attend for more than an hour need to pay £15 per hour, in advance, to the Finance office.

Kitchen

Students who live off-site are welcome to use the kitchen located under the stairs in Easneye Hall to prepare a cup of tea or coffee. There is a box with tea, coffee, sugar etc for your use only. The supplies in this box are replenished by your contributions, so please make sure that you make a contribution if you use this facility.

Laundry Room

Located in the basement of Easneye House. The washing and drying machines are run on a pre-paid system by 'CircuitPlus'. Students will need to first download the CircuitPlus App in order to pay for usage of the machines. Ask at Reception about the washing/tumble drying fees. Please bring your own washing powder. The College has two tumble dryers, or you can choose to hang the clothes in the drying room for free and wait a bit longer.

Parking and driving

Cars should be parked in the front or rear car parks and **not** in the courtyard outside of reception. When parking in the rear car park do not park in the reserved parking spaces for catering staff or in the area outside the kitchen which is a key delivery area. There should be no driving in the courtyard from 11pm – 7 am.

Pigeon Holes

These are to the left when entering the Ash Centre from the entrance near the dining room (Maple Hall). Your mail will be put into the pigeon hole according to the first letter of your surname/family name. (Names that include 'de' or 'van' etc are filed in the D and V pigeon holes respectively).

Post

To send mail, just drop the mail at reception and it will be taken to the post office. There are also Post Offices and post boxes in Stanstead Abbots and Ware.

Morris Lounge

Students who live off site are welcome to use the Morris Lounge in Easneye House during the day to relax or study. However, please note, this room is sometimes used by conference groups so may not always be available.

Notice Boards

The notice boards are very important in general College life and for you as a family/student living off campus probably even more, since you spend more time off site and may miss notices given during meals. There are 4 important notice boards to be aware of:

1. the FLOCs notice board is in the Ash Centre just past the pigeon holes on the left
2. the general College life information board in Maple Hall
3. the brief messages notice board in the entrance to Easneye House (near the Library)
4. the safeguarding notices boards in the Ash Centre and Easneye House (first floor near GBR room)

Recycling

Paper, plastic, cans, tins and glass can all be recycled in the recycle area behind reception. Please clean all things before putting them in the right places. Non-recyclable waste can be put in the big containers behind Oak House.

Rotas for wash up, maple hall cleaning and maintenance

Are displayed on the Notice Board in Maple Hall to the right hand side of where you queue for your meals.

School uniforms

There is a cupboard in Easneye House full of School Uniforms for local schools, in all sizes, please check with the Housekeeper if you need any for your children.

Shop

There is a small shop in the 'Student Centre' where you can buy basic groceries. The shop is open for half an hour after lunch and dinner.

Toys

There are many toys and books left behind by other families, please check the bargain basement, the Wilberforce Lounge, or ask the Housekeeper where they are kept.

Tutor group

Tutor groups are like home groups, to give and receive in, and children are welcome. Previous groups have said how much they enjoyed seeing and playing with children in their Tutor groups as 'it's more like real life!' So parents, don't worry about your child not being silent and talk to other members of your group, and / or your Tutor, if you are finding it difficult.

Vegetarian & special diets

Please talk to our chefs if you are a vegetarian or have special dietary requirements.

5. Financial Life

Below are details of financial benefits which have been claimed by families or students living off campus in the past. We are unable to confirm whether all of these are currently available but it gives you a starting point to find out for yourself. There are restrictions on some of them, and some depend on whether you are from the UK, other countries in the European Union or the rest of the world.

Means-tested grants may be available for parents who are both studying, contact Hertfordshire County Council (<https://hertfordshire.gov.uk>) for more details. It may seem like a lot of effort to fill in lengthy forms, but the financial rewards can be significant. You can apply in advance for these grants. There may be other benefits out there which haven't yet been discovered ...

Name of benefit	Reason given	How to apply
Council Tax exemption	Students	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/home
OU refund	OU students (who have not previously received a grant in the UK)	www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport
Tax refund	Job (studying part-time, working part-time)	www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs
College (top-up) bursary	College bursary fund (subject to availability)	Tutor/Finance/Training Administrator
Fees	Students	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/home
Grant	Students	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/home
Student loan	Students	www.gov.uk/student-finance
Higher education grant	Students	www.gov.uk/student-finance
Housing benefit	Low income	www.eastherts.gov.uk , www.broxbourne.gov.uk
Parents learning allowance	Both parents studying?	www.gov.uk/parents-learning-allowance
Child tax credit	Low income with child(ren)	www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs
Working tax credit	Low income with child(ren)	www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs
Child benefit	Resident in UK Child born in UK?	www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs
Free school meals	Low income	www.hertfordshire.gov.uk
Second-hand uniforms for local schools	Uniforms left behind by previous families.	Ask the Housekeeper.
International Student Card	All students (if studying at least 20 hrs/week)	Normally one of the students is responsible for applications; check the FLOC notice board
Travelcard/Student Oyster card	Discounted card for public transport in London & Greater London area	Ask the Transport Rep (a member of the Student Committee) for details.