



Homestay Guidelines for Host Families

This handbook will help you to support your International student.

What is a Home-Stay?

"Home stay" means accommodation provided to an international student in the residence of a family or household where no more than four international students are accommodated.

Home Stay Guidelines

Thank you for agreeing to share your home and family with an International Student from Mount Roskill Grammar. We hope you find it rewarding and that you gain a life-long extended family member.



These guidelines have evolved over a number of years and should form the basis of discussion between the host family and the student. We recommend that you discuss these issues with your student in the first week to avoid future conflict.

Remember, you are the parent figure. This means you need to set firm, consistent rules to keep your student safe. They need to obey NZ law, school rules and respect your family. They also need to feel valued by your family. If there ARE issues that arise, we are here to support you so please contact us before small problems become bigger ones.

International Department

Wendy Reid – International Director - Ph. 6210050 ext. 756
Jade Harris- International Marketing & Short term Groups ext 703
Kris Zhang- International Administrator/Chinese support ext 817
Lilian Li - Recruitment Manager (China & SE Asia) ext. 898
Debbie Evans - homestay co-ordinator x724
Fia Clark – Homestay Co-ordinator - ext. 706



School Emergency Phone – 021 908 121
(for emergencies ONLY. All non-urgent enquiries, please email).

Student Arrival

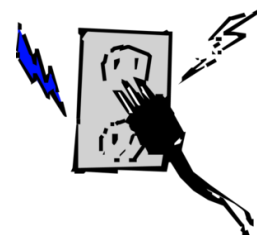
As soon as your student arrives, make a note of their NZ mobile number and give them yours. Also make them add your address in case of emergency also.

When we place a student with you we will advise you of the student's course start date, duration and any student details available to us. We do not have control over when their flights are booked, so please be aware there may be some wait between being allocated your student and actually receiving confirmed flight details.

Your student will be picked up from Auckland Airport and delivered to your home by a member of our staff or you may choose to welcome them at the airport also.

In the first day or so of arriving it is a good idea to go over expectations. e.g. shower times, where to put laundry, what time is dinner, what to eat if they are hungry etc to make them feel comfortable. We recommend a written welcome and instruction list (one is available on request) for clarity. You may need to clarify often and answer questions.

Electrical Goods New Zealand electricity is 240 volts. Students may need to use transformers on any electrical appliances they bring here. Please check this carefully BEFORE you plug anything in.



Cultural Differences

- a) Discuss with your student how your family greets, says goodnight, etc.
- b) The biggest difference we have encountered is the openness of New Zealand society when compared to that of Asia. Please understand that most students from Asia are uncomfortable with physical contact. They can often misinterpret what for us is normal affection. Girls can also feel uneasy if left alone in the house with male family members. To avoid any possible problems or misunderstanding for your men, please make sure girls have a female companion if the host mother is away overnight. (Some Asian fathers are absent from home more often than not so there may be no familiarity with how to interact as father / daughter and even the most natural (for us) signs of affection, can cause embarrassment or misunderstanding).
- c) In contrast, South American and Italian students are horrified at our lack of physical contact. They find us very cold indeed and can behave in ways that we may consider inappropriate. Please be clear about expectations.
- d) German students seem to be comfortable with NZ customs but please check.
- e) Please remember most problems occur through cultural differences and not bad behaviour. Good communication can solve many potential problems. Be sensitive to your student's personality and try to bridge cultural barriers to form a strong international – family relationship. Treat the student as you would want your own son or daughter to be treated overseas.

Transport

- a) From time to time you will be expected to pick up or drop off your student as per your other family members.
- b) Please teach your student how to bus from your house to school and back again (if appropriate), how to read the bus timetable, where to buy bus tickets etc. Check they have a school ID to lower the cost – these are available from school.
- c) Please either drive or help your student to catch the bus on their first day at School. Students new to New Zealand find our buses frustrating and poor.
- d) Please tell students that taking a taxi in NZ is expensive. They may be familiar with Uber. Please explain safety precautions. They must be in regular contact with you to let you know they have reached their destination safely.
- e) All students are responsible for paying their own transport costs.
- f) Extra transport requirements and care may be necessary for students under 18 years of age. Some students may have tuition after school, requiring collection after lessons. Please ensure arrangements have been made for their safe transport home. (especially during winter months).
- g) It is expected you will deliver your student to the Airport on departure.
- h) All students must obey NZ road user laws. If your student is driving, please notify us. Students need permission to drive in New Zealand.
- i) Students may only be driven by the home stay family or a person on a full NZ licence that has been approved by the home stay's family or school staff.



Bedroom

Students need to have their own bedroom and their own bed with all bed linen provided, storage for clothes, a desk and chair for homework, and a heater in winter.

This is their sanctuary when they need to be alone, so please make sure your children do not intrude.



A heater is required as most cultures find our houses cold and under heated. Please be clear when discussing when / how to turn the heater off.

Long term students are not to share a room with other students (particularly with short term groups).

Meals

- a) Monday to Friday – please provide breakfast, a cut lunch, after school snacks and an evening meal. Be clear with 'house' rules e.g. what can be eaten for snacks. Discuss what they like / dislike.
- b) Saturday and Sunday – please provide breakfast, lunch, an evening meal and snacks as per normal family arrangements.
- c) Do not 'hide' food or reserve food for your family only. This is a common complaint that really upsets students.
- d) If you take your student out for lunch or dinner (eg McDonalds) it should be treated as a meal at home and paid for by you. If your student chooses to go out for lunch or dinner with their own friends, it is the student who pays.
- e) Teenagers often have 'hollow legs' and can eat large amounts. Weetbix, rice, wholemeal bread help.
- f) Please be aware that our food is quite different from what your student may be used to at home. Ask if there is anything they cannot eat, but encourage them to try new things. If you are willing they may like to cook you one of their cultural dishes. Some students are used to their mothers providing every food item for them and are not used to making food for themselves.
- g) Please provide your student with guidelines for what is expected at your table so they don't feel foolish. You may expect to say grace, or for everyone to wait to eat until the mother is seated. You may be offended by noisy eating whereas other cultures find this the norm.
- h) Family meals are an important time to practise good communication.
- i) Please be aware that a large number of international students do not eat beef and/or pork, therefore, they may request to be placed with a family who eat what they do. Also be aware of spicy food.



Shower and Toilet

- a) Students should be told not to place too much toilet paper or any objects in the toilet as it may become blocked. Please show your female students where to place their sanitary items. Some cultures place all toilet paper and objects in a basket so you will need to explain carefully what happens in New Zealand.
- b) Host families - please explain how your shower and other facilities work and the surfaces that you leave dry. You may have to ask your student to limit their shower to 10 minutes.



Smoking

- a) Make your family views on smoking very clear from the students first day at your home. Many students do smoke in their home country.
- b) No smoking in school uniform, ever!
- c) In NZ it is illegal to sell cigarettes/tobacco products to persons under 18. It is also illegal for a person over 18 to give a person under 18 cigarettes/tobacco products in a public place. It is not, however, illegal for a person under 18 to purchase cigarettes (only the shop-owner is prosecuted), and there is no restriction on the possession and consumption of tobacco for those under 18. [Smoke-free Environments Act 1990, Smoke-free Environments Amendment Act 2003]



Drinking

The legal age for drinking alcohol in New Zealand is 18+. It's illegal to give someone under the age of 18 alcohol unless you are their parent or legal guardian. You could get a \$2000NZD fine if you break the rules! Students must be 18 years old or older to buy alcohol in New Zealand and need to show proof of age. Do not give your student alcohol. If you are concerned they are underage drinking or are concerned for their safety please contact us immediately. For more information see [Staying safe in NZ.](#)

Telephones

- a) Most students have their own mobile phone to contact their family at home. You may need to help organize a NZ SIM card.
- b) All students are responsible to pay their own mobile phone bills



Computers & Internet

- a) All students expect to be able to use the internet, especially as a way to contact their family. If you do not have internet please let us know.
- b) If you have unlimited wi-fi you may want to give your student a computer curfew if you are worried about the amount of time they spend gaming or watching movies. Computer use can be a real problem, impacting negatively on school and family life. Ask us for help if you have issues with this. (Some families turn off the modem at 10pm each night).
- c) Internet facilities are available at MRGS library for all students to use during interval and lunchtime. There are many other places with free wi-fi, including the Three Kings Library.

Sick students

- a) Please advise the school if your student will be absent because they are sick.
- b) If students are absent for 3 days they will need a doctor's certificate.
- c) International students should be taken to the host's own local doctor in cases of illness.
- d) International students should be taken to the nearest hospital or emergency clinic in an emergency.
- e) All International students have medical and travel insurance while studying in New Zealand.
- f) Any students needing medical assistance need to pay for their own treatment at time of treatment (not host parents) and claim for the expenses (with their receipt) through the international office.
- g) Most international students are not entitled to publicly funded health services while in New Zealand. Full details on entitlements are available on the Ministry of Health website at <http://www.moh.govt.nz>.
- h) The Accident Compensation Corporation provides accident insurance for all New Zealand citizens, residents and temporary visitors to New Zealand. Further information can be viewed on the ACC website at <http://www.acc.co.nz>.



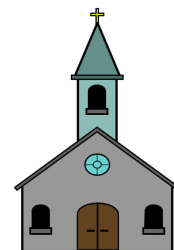
Housekeeping

- a) As a member of the family, students should assist with some minimal household tasks if asked to do so. If the New Zealand children help around the house, so should the student.
- b) Laundry is usually done by the hosts. Some students prefer to do their own but please ensure that the student knows how to use the machinery and where to hang their washing. (Some students do not like their washing hung out in public, please respect their wishes).



Religion / Church

Students come from many cultures and religions and this should be respected. It is often very difficult and embarrassing for students to say 'no' when pressed to attend church that is not their belief. However, if you have a youth group that your children attend, they may want to attend also.



Curfews and safety

Please help us to keep our International students safe and respect these curfew times. Talk to them about not walking alone in the dark.

AGE	Sunday – Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Under 15 years	6.00 pm	Under supervision	Under supervision
15 - 16	6.00 pm	10.00 pm	11.00 pm
17 - 18	6.00 pm	12.00 midnight	12.00 midnight

Always keep in touch with your student by text.

- Students must negotiate with the host parent in advance about whether they will or will not be home for a meal.
- Students must negotiate with the host parent about where they are going (address) and what time they will be home and leave a contact number if possible (in case of urgent messages). Cell phone contact only is not good enough.
- The host family will make suitable arrangements for the student if they are to be away from home for a meal or overnight.
- No student is allowed to stay away from the host family home overnight without consent of the host family.



Holidays

- The school requires written consent from legal parents before they will approve of students taking any time off school. Students require both parental and School consent for absences.
- Long term students usually return home for the Christmas break.
- International students are not allowed to travel independently (i.e., without approved parental supervision) while they are studying at MRGS.
- International students are encouraged to travel in holiday time with their host family, with school organised groups and on trips and activities organised by their agents.
- International Staff MUST approve all travel arrangements prior to travel.



Home Stay Changes

- 2 weeks' notice or payment in lieu of notice is required by either party.
- MRGS reserves the right to move a student without prior notice if necessary. In such circumstances, we ask for your co-operation regarding payments.
- No student is to move without the prior consent of the Accommodation Co-ordinator. The student visa may be withdrawn if a student moves without notice.

Uniform

- a) At MRGS all students wear uniform, please help them in purchasing their uniform. Uniforms can be purchased as part of the orientation process.
- b) New uniforms can be purchased at the school uniform shop open Mondays and Thursdays 8-9am and 3-4pm.

School Rules

A student attending MRGS must abide by school rules. They must wear correct uniform and attend all classes EVERY school day unless they have an explanation. Please read the school newsletter so you are aware of holidays etc.

Students who are not abiding by the school rules will be dealt with as follows:

- a) Student disciplinary procedures for unsatisfactory performance / behaviour.
- b) Daily check to International Staff.
- c) Written and verbal warnings may be given to the student.
- d) A student may be asked to return home in serious situations – below are some examples:
 - I. Illegal activities (drugs, shoplifting, theft, driving without a licence)
 - II. Violence and aggression
 - III. Habitual truancy and defiance of requests to improve
 - IV. Bullying
 - V. Emotional imbalance
 - VI. Dishonesty / untrustworthiness
 - VII. Inability / unwillingness to comply with school and home stay rules
 - VIII. Inappropriate and unsafe social behaviour

Students Are Responsible For

- a) Stationery / Workbook costs
- b) Any luxury cosmetic items, personal toiletries
- c) Personal pocket money and personal expenses
- d) Bus fares
- e) Exam fees
- f) Holiday costs
- g) Medical / Dental expenses
- h) Telephone accounts
- i) Uniforms
- j) Losses and theft of student property (a police report is necessary for insurance).

Note: Parents and students have signed a contract agreeing to abide by all of the rules and policies.

Home Stay Payments



- a) You will receive \$275 per week (for 7 nights), \$39.28 per night (2020)
- b) Home stay payments will be made every fortnight, a week in advance and a week in arrears into your nominated account
- c) If you are going to be away, please inform the school and make sure a reliable adult will provide proper supervision for your student. If you cannot find a suitable adult then please give sufficient notice to the school so a temporary home can be found for your student.
- d) No student is to be left unsupervised overnight at any stage, regardless of their age.
- a) We discourage students from breaking their study by extended weeks away in May or July. If your student leaves your home during the school year for a holiday, you will receive the usual rate. We expect them to give us two weeks' notice of this.
- b) Sometimes however, a student needs to return to their home country for bereavement, medical or academic reasons. In this situation, the school will pay the homestay family \$15 per night until the student returns, and then the usual nightly rate will apply (unless notified otherwise).
- c) If your student is returning to you after their Christmas holiday, the school will pay you a \$50 per week holding fee capped at \$300.00 for the time they are away. If the student leaves items in the room they should be tidied away.
- d) The host family will not hold the student responsible for any minor accidental breakages or damages to the residence or property during his or her stay. Mt Roskill Grammar School is not responsible for any debts, damages or expenses incurred by the student to the homestay host or any other entity.
- e) In order to protect both students and families, no cash should be exchanged unless approved by the school first.

Other

- a) Check the goals of the student when they arrive. A short term student has different expectations than a long term student. Set up regular contact with the student's parents. Students should be able to have fun while still attempting homework, assignments and exams. Please encourage regular homework habits and don't be afraid to ask what they are doing at school.
- b) Host families are not expected to:
 - I. Pay for toll or mobile phone calls
 - II. Cook special food
 - III. Offer accommodation to visiting friends or relatives.
 - IV. Comply with unreasonable requests.

Thank you for your support of our students. Their experience in homestay is an important part of their perception of NZ and our school community

Culture Shock

"Culture Shock" is the name given to the phenomenon which occurs when people move from a culture in which they understand and interpret the values, patterns of behaviour, gestures etc into a culture in which they do not know and understand these things. Your student is a long way from home, so your understanding, listening and concern are appreciated. Odd behaviour can sometimes be a reaction to the stress of culture shock. It is unlikely that your student would be knowingly and deliberately rude. The below is a diagram of how your student may be feeling.



Helpful links:

Mount Roskill Grammar School is a signatory to the Education (Pastoral care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016. For more information see:
<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/education-code-of-practice/>

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