



HOMESTAY FAMILY GUIDELINES

Thank you for your interest in hosting an international student. These guidelines are a summary of what is expected.

General:

- Homestay caregivers must be 25 years of age or over.
- Most student placements are for the school year (end of January - beginning of December). Students usually stay in NZ for the term break holidays but return home for the summer. Occasionally students/homestay may need to change during the year.
- At times the school needs short term placements for example 1 or 2 terms.
- The student must have their own bedroom within the family home (unattached sleep-outs or similar arrangements are not acceptable).
- International students and their families expect an English-speaking home environment.
- Homestay payments will be made weekly in advance. The 2024 rate, \$315, is expected to cover all a student's homestay living expenses. It should not be relied on as a permanent income source.
- The school cannot always guarantee an immediate or subsequent student placement.
- The school expects there to be no more than 3 international students in the household.

Prospective homestay families must agree:

- To submit to an initial police vetting check and then a police vet every 3 years for all persons aged 18 years or over residing in the house, or those who stay overnight on a regular basis.
- To be available for an initial homestay assessment interview with all family members present.
- To provide at least TWO-character references.
- To ongoing monitoring/home visits (at least twice a year) as required by the Education Code of Practice 2021.
- To notify the international department of any changes to the household.

A homestay family is expected to provide the student with:

- A safe and nurturing living and studying environment appropriate for a teenager.
- Their own furnished bedroom with good ventilation and light; suitable blinds and/or curtains to provide privacy and insulation; a table/desk, chair and lamp suitable for study; a clean, comfortable, adult size bed with pillows, linen and blankets/duvet; storage for clothing, everyday items and personal effects; a heater may be required in winter, and a smoke alarm within 3 meters of the room..
- Three meals a day, including a packed lunch during the school week and between meals snacks. The student should be included in family takeaway meals and family meals at restaurants.
- Laundry.
- Access to the house including a key and alarm code if applicable.
- Access to the internet.

A homestay family is also expected to:

- Make the student feel comfortable and part of the family. Allow the student the same rights and responsibilities as any child in the home, provided these are reasonable and understood.
- Take an interest in the student's schooling and extra-curricular activities.
- Include the student in family activities.
- Ensure adequate supervision of the student; students under 14 must never be left alone. There must always be adult supervision in the home overnight.
- Support the school to help maintain the safety and wellbeing of the student including caring for the student if they are unwell, if necessary, taking them to a doctor; setting expectations about acceptable behaviour; knowing the whereabouts of the student; communicating with the student by phone, text or messaging; keeping an eye on their sleep, eating patterns & screen time.
- Communicate with the international department on all matters concerning the student.

The homestay family is not expected to:

- Insure the student's belongings.
- Provide accommodation for visiting friends or relatives.
- Make major academic, medical or social decisions for the student.

Homestay Parents can expect the Hillcrest High International Department to:

- Provide support as required and quick action to be taken with problems.
- Provide regular contact and information.
- Provide 24 hour 'emergency' contact and to be available during work hours for non-urgent issues.

Hillcrest High School reserves the right to:

- Decline any application without explanation.
- Not place students with a homestay without explanation.
- Withdraw a student from a homestay without explanation.

Other points to consider:

- As a young person, away from home, usually for the first time, living in an environment quite different from their own, students will need time to adjust, guidance and kindness.
- Treat the student with the same love and care that you would like your own child to receive in the same situation. If in doubt about what to do, it's helpful to ask yourself "*what would I like a host family to do for my son/daughter if they were living overseas?*"
- On arrival the student may need your help to purchase a school uniform, obtain a sim card and Bee bus card, and understand New Zealand money. You will also need to ensure that they know how to get to and from school safely which may mean accompanying the student on the first few days.
- The student's own family may want to contact you from time to time.

Contact:

Homestay Manager, Mrs Delwyn Dawson

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