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# 2019 Homestay Policy

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## Rationale:

Where parents choose for the Department of Education and Training (DET) to arrange and approve accommodation, the Department, through the school, is responsible for provision of accommodation, support and general welfare for the student. These arrangements shall be in place for the period that the student will be under 18 while in Australia. This policy has been developed to meet the requirements of the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) National Code 2018, Student Visa Condition 8532 and the VRQA Guidelines for the Enrolment of Overseas Students Aged Under 18 Years which require that appropriate arrangements have been made for the accommodation, welfare and support of students under 18 years of age.

This policy is designed to be consistent with the International Education Division (IED). It is an International Student Program Quality Standards requirement that all schools have a homestay policy in place to aid in the provision of care to students in Option 3 (Nominated Third Party) and Option 4 (Homestay) accommodation arrangements.

## DET Compulsory Homestay Policy Requirements for All Schools:

Where the school arranges approved homestay accommodation the school manages the day-to-day coordination of student support, accommodation and welfare through the school's International Student Coordinator. The broader oversight of student welfare role is undertaken by the Principal.

## Welfare Provision

- The School will organise homestay accommodation of a high quality and which provides a child safe, comfortable and caring environment.
- The homestay accommodation will be provided by a suitable family, couple or single person. The Homestay host must be at least 21 year of age.
- Current Working With Children Checks must be supplied by all adults residing or frequently residing in Option 3 or Option 4 homestay arrangements prior to the student moving into the residence and be maintained throughout their stay or until they turn 18 years of age.
- The maximum number of international students per homestay is three at all times, regardless of the provider.
- Students must provide written permission from their parents to the school and have the school's endorsement if they wish to stay away from their homestay overnight. The school also must hold relevant contact details and inform the homestay of the arrangement prior to the student being allowed to stay away.
- The School will monitor progress of homestay arrangements, including twice yearly visits to verify that the accommodation continues to meet all requirements.
- Prior to any additional adults commencing residence at the location, the Homestay host must advise the School and provide Working With Children Checks.
- The school will conduct annual training for all homestay providers including the School's Child Safe and CCYP Reportable Conduct Scheme policy and procedures.

The International Student Coordinator manages day-to-day support such as:

- information and advice to students, parents and homestay providers
- homestay accommodation placement and management
- supervision of student reporting and monitoring as required by DET
- provision of student reports and feedback to parents
- attendance/academic performance issues management

The Principal or Assistant Principal maintains responsibility for all accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for international students at the school. This includes:

- periodic (at least twice yearly) review of accommodation, support and welfare arrangements for all international students
- critical incident management
- liaison with the DET IED regarding complex or significant international student management matters (eg critical incidents)
- oversight of international student program management
- giving interim consent to medical treatment in emergencies
- dispute resolution where issues relate to homestay or the International Student Coordinator.

### Other Policy Requirements:

### Fees and Services

- A weekly fee of \$300 will be paid by the students family directly to the school, except when Option 3 Third Party arrangements are in place and payments will be coordinated directly between the host and the students family. This fee covers expenses associated with the provision of the following homestay services:
  - ⇒ Single bedroom for the student's exclusive use
  - ⇒ Three meals per day, seven days per week (including a cooked evening meal)
  - ⇒ Facilities including a bed, wardrobe, towels and linen
  - ⇒ Gas, electricity, heating and water costs
  - ⇒ Cleaning services of common living areas
  - ⇒ Use of living areas within residence
  - ⇒ Study facilities, including a desk, study light and bookcase
- Mobile telephone and internet expenses will be the student's responsibility to pay. In most cases a charge of approximately \$10 per week for internet use in the home will be incorporated into the weekly homestay fee, as stated on the Homestay Responsibility Agreement.
- The initial payment will include fees for the first school term in advance plus a bond that is the equivalent of two weeks fees. The bond will be held by the school and returned to the students family at the completion of the homestay provision period, if there are no outstanding fees. Subsequent payments will be for approximately 12 weeks fees at a time.
- During holidays away students will pay half the usual rate to retain their room at the homestay accommodation. Students will pay the full rate for the day of departure and arrival.
- Students and/or parents are required to reimburse homestay providers for any damage to property caused by the student, or costs incurred by the student during the time of residence.
- Students are expected to eat meals prepared by the homestay family, if they choose to eat alternative meals they will pay for them with their own money. Any major concerns about food provision should be discussed with the School.

- Any overpaid or unpaid fee's will be finalised at the time of cancellation of homestay arrangements, and parties will be required to honour their agreements to pay/receive money for time spent in the homestay.
- Complaints that cannot be resolved by either the homestay provider or the student should be referred in writing to the School.
- Complaints that cannot be resolved by the school should be submitted in writing to the International Education Division of the Department of Education and Training.

### Homestay Arrangements:

- If a homestay provider wishes to terminate the homestay agreement, at least two weeks notice is given to the student and School. Any advance payments should be refunded to the students family.
- Where a student moves out of a homestay, at least two weeks notice must be given to the homestay provider and School. Giving less than this may result in the bond not being returned.
- Students, homestay providers and the school welfare manager (Principal class officer) will be asked to sign a Homestay Responsibility Agreement on commencement of the student's enrolment. This will outline the house rules and requirements as well as homestay costs and methods of payment.
- Students and homestay providers may not change the homestay arrangement without consultation with and approval from the school and review of the Homestay Responsibility Agreement
- Homestay host parents must reside in the same residence as the students. The only exception is where a host owns a secure self – contained flat or bungalow on their own property.
- A clear, flexible approach to matters of discipline, house rules and co-operative living will be adopted. Students should be advised that many Australian families share household chores and that they will be expected to clean up after themselves, keep their room tidy and leave the bathroom dry and tidy after use.
- Homestay providers will participate in school events as a parent might; attending parent/teacher interviews, signing permission forms (co-signed by the School), monitoring attendance, assisting with studies and providing timely feedback to the School.
- Homestay providers will encourage and assist the student to make the most of the experience and get involved in the local and broader community as well as assist with student orientation upon arrival.
- Homestay parents are encouraged to build a rapport with the students' family and communicate with them directly.
- Students should stay with the homestay provider for a minimum period of 1 school term. Requests to change within this period will only be accepted upon negotiation with the School.
- International students of the opposite sex will not be permitted to be placed in the same homestay.
- Students over the age of 18 may be given permission to move out of the approved accommodation providing written parental consent is given and the student's choice of accommodation is deemed appropriate by the School.

**Endorsed by School Council: Wednesday 20th March, 2019**

**To be reviewed yearly in accordance with any changes to IED Regulations.**