**John McGlashan College**

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**GUIDELINES FOR**

**HOST PARENTS**

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**Arrival and Settling period**

**Preparation**

We suggest this booklet is discussed (where appropriate) with all members of the family so that they can all help make the new student feel at home, and help with any questions they might have.

There are adjustments to be made on both sides. Students, during the settling in period, may be quite shy, reserved, uncertain or demanding. They need your sympathetic help but they also need to consider how your household is run. Please do not take anything for granted – your student will need to be told everything and that is best done early in their stay, although it may seem rude or unwelcoming to you. Young people from all cultures tend to stretch boundaries and that is more likely if they do not know exactly what the limits are.

**Requirements**

***Your student needs their own bedroom, with wardrobe, chest of drawers, desk, lamp, chair and heater, mirror and all bedding and towels.***

**Responsibility**

Your student will be told that while out of school hours he is under your control and is your responsibility. If in doubt about any given situation, please ring the International Student Manager, the Director of International or the Principal.

***The final responsibility lies with the school and we cannot support you if we don’t know the difficulty.***

**Money**

Our students will probably be responsible for their own money. However, they may come to you with questions about our banking system. You may need to remind your student not to allow funds to get too low because it takes time to receive money from overseas. Loaning money can lead to problems. You should suggest to your student that a lot of money should not be carried or kept at home.

***Banking arrangements can be made with the International Student Manager at school.***

Although the school is available to help students, you will be in the ‘front line’ and may have to answer numerous questions about costs, transport, routes, entertainment - you name it. Most certainly you will be surprised at how your knowledge of your community will grow.

**Shopping**

Your student will need to either be able to ask you or to have access to shopping regularly for their school and personal needs. In particular they may not have suitable warm clothing.

***Occasionally you may be required to go shopping for clothes for your student.***

**Letting off Steam**

Almost 24 hours a day your student will be encountering new customs and will be extra sensitive to what is said. Outside the home people may make unthinking remarks which may hurt them. Let your student ‘blow off steam’ to you.

Sometimes students may make unfavourable comparisons between New Zealand and their home country. This needs to be handled with understanding. Try to remain objective and not become angry. Encourage them to be open and honest with you.

**English Ability**

Students will have studied English at school but may not be confident with conversational English. They will also not be aware of New Zealand expressions and colloquialisms and be more used to American speech. A single word or phrase may mean one thing to the student and another to you and misunderstandings can result.

***Writing important things down for your student can be helpful.***

All members of the family should speak slowly and repeat things until they are understood, but try not to raise your voice or speak pidgin or oversimplified English, things many people find themselves doing unconsciously. Watch for signs that students are ‘lost’ and encourage them to stop and interrupt you.  ***If you ask them to repeat what you have said to them, it will help you gauge whether or not they have understood you.*** Through conversations students learn to speak as well as understand conversational English and gain confidence in their ability. They may be shy about initiating conversation but will appreciate your help. The school can help with language exercises if you would like.

A student might spend a lot of time in his room. It may be that speaking English is a strain or that he believes he is doing his best in not bothering his elders. Explain patiently to him the differences in social customs, i.e. it is polite to make small talk and socialise before and after mealtimes, even for half an hour only.

When they have friends around, they will want to talk in their own language. Unless their English is very poor, encourage them to speak English in shared living areas. Always remember to smile – a smile makes friends and surmounts barriers.

**Culture Shock**

Changes in language, study, food, home life and climate all combine to require a major level of adjustment. There is a fairly predictable cycle of adjustment, and it is important you should be aware of it. Each student is different and may not experience all of the stages in the same order but they are all normal reactions.

**Everything is wonderful stage.** On arrival everything is new, exciting and interesting.

**Everything is awful stage.** Students become accustomed to their new life and may start criticising things that only weeks ago were ‘great’.

**Everything is OK**. Things aren’t so bad after all and the trend begins to reverse. Suddenly situations are not so depressing and students find things interesting again.

**The final stage is achieved when students feel ‘at home’ in our society**. This may never happen for some students but many do achieve this leave. It takes time – up to 2 years.

**Family Relationships**

Someone new coming into any home alters the dynamics of the family. Each member of your family will have to adjust to the student and for some; this may take considerable effort and thought.

If you have young children you may find they feel ‘left out’ in the early days when your student will require a lot of your attention. You may need to explain to your children how difficult it is for someone to come to a new country with new people to meet and new customs to learn. Some families find the student and the children ‘bond’ very quickly. While students love the children they sometimes find it difficult to ask the children to leave them alone for study or time out. You may need to observe carefully and have a quiet word with your children if you think this is needed.

**Home Sickness**

Be sensitive and supportive, however, also speak positively to them and reassure them that this is a natural thing, it will gradually pass and that there are exciting things for them to look forward to.

You may notice at this time that your student is noticeably **withdrawn**. They will find it all a bit of a strain, 24 hours a day of English with no escape at hand.

Try to ensure they do not get over-tired and give him space and time on their own.

***Respect their need to have their room as a private sanctuary and make sure family members knock before entering.***

Remember too that most students come from culture where they are ultra-polite in order to survive in big urban countries. For instance, they are not used to ‘kidding’ it can mean to them ‘loss of face’. To avoid making a mistake or looking stupid they may become reticent. Reassurance may be needed.

**Sleeping**

Remember, your student may find it cold in New Zealand and appreciate the use of an electric blanket. Do remember to tell them not to leave it on while sleeping. Demonstrate to your student how to make his bed and when to change the sheets, if that is expected.

**Study**

Your student will need a private and comfortable environment in which to study and will also require the use of a heater, or heating in their bedroom. You may find they study hard and for long hours. This is what they are used to and as long as it doesn’t interfere with other interests it is important they can do this.

**Body Contact**

Initially your student may not be comfortable with your hugs (offered ‘for comfort’) as Asians do not hug each other. Some students will take to it naturally, some will not. If he doesn’t do not feel embarrassed or offended. He will gradually get used to it and be comfortable with it. In countries, such as Japan, displays of affection, even between a married couple, are seldom seen by children or in public. The head is very sacred in most Asian cultures. Do not touch Japanese on the head or ruffle up their hair.

**Cultural differences**

In some Asian societies e.g. Japan, males appear to take precedence over females because the roles of men and women differ from here. Asian cultures can also measure social status in unexpected ways and each one is different. Do not assume all Asians will mix with each other easily. If incidents in and around such issues where to arise, please communicate to your students that in New Zealand that social equality and being respectful to one another is of great importance to New Zealanders. Again please contact the International Student Manager or International Director if an awkward issue were to arise.

**Politeness**

It is a virtue in Asian countries to be polite. They like to show respect to seniors and will particularly avoid making any objection to their elders. This can cause misunderstanding.

***Please encourage your student to say what they think and feel and to ask questions.***

Explain that you will not think badly of them if they criticise or question something. This will help them improve their English as well as help them with the Western way of thinking – and, of course, will help develop mutual understanding.

Customs vary. Some cultures think only greedy people open a present in front of the giver for instance. Ask what their customs are and explain we might do things differently but do not mean to be rude.

**At Home**

**Household Duties**

We encourage students to help in the house as part of experiencing life with a New Zealand family and as an aid to learning conversation skills, within reason of course. Asian children are used to having all their needs taken care of by their parents or domestic helpers. Students may feel that it is inappropriate to help around the house as they are board paying guests, but duties within reason are supported by the school.

You can expect students to keep their own room tidy, and gradually encourage them to help with duties and fit in the same as other family members. Demonstration by example will help convey the custom in your home.

**Transport**

It is expected that within reason that you transport your students to and from school and extra-curricular activities. This is most important in the winter, when it is cold and there is less daylight. Communicating to students the location of public transport and providing timetable information is encouraged as well.

**Food**

You may be certain that our diet which includes so many dairy products and meat will be very different to the student’s diet at home. Rice forms the basis of diet in most Asian countries. Sometimes students are very hungry at first. This will be due to the elimination of rice from their diet. Other students may seem to have no appetite at all. This will change with time but if you have concerns please tell us.

Be prepared for your student to dislike some foods. It is often a good idea to serve a little at first. Let them know they can leave food on the plate without offending you and try to give them rice. A rice cooker on the bench is a good idea.

In the early days do not be surprised if the student cannot bear to be around when meat is cooking because of the smell. Other things, like ice cream, are instantly attractive.

Your student may even like to cook for you on occasions.

It is important to find out your student’s religion. If he is a Buddhist he will not be able to eat beef, neither would a Muslim eat pork. Others may be vegetarian.

Your student might eat his meal without saying a word. He is not being rude, just conforming to rules he is used to, i.e. in some parts of Asia it is polite not to eat and talk at the same time. The Japanese, by contrast, find some New Zealand households unsociable because people may not eat together let alone have conversations.

**Religion**

Religion is personal and it goes without saying that you should respect your student’s religious beliefs and the student will respect yours. Students may make special arrangements to observe religion in everyday life and this may include dietary restrictions.

Some recognition by your family of particular religious holidays will be appreciated by your student.

**Smoking, Drinking, Drugs**

Smoking, alcohol and use of non-prescription drugs are strictly forbidden. If you have concerns please get in touch with the school.

**Social Life**

Please encourage your student to mix widely, enjoy outings and to feel free to invite a friend around or ask permission to go to a friend’s place. However, do stress the importance of letting you know where they are, for their own safety. They should give you their mobile number and a contact number for where they are going and if you have doubts, ring it to

check if the student is there and if it is a suitable place. Hosts often find that checking with other host families is useful.

**Telephone**

Your student will be aware that he has to pay you for any toll calls made from your telephone. However, we recommend that you go through the rules and procedures with your student early in their stay with you. Many students use phone cards.

Asian students very often receive calls late in the night due to time differences and rates overseas. However, if he is spending too much time on the telephone talking to friends locally, you might wish to tell him that unimportant calls should be made before 9.30pm as it disturbs the rest of the household when trying to sleep.

Some students may due to initial homesickness, run up hefty telephone bills. In order to prevent this from happening, it may be wise to inform the student right at the start to let you know of any calls they are likely to make (so that you are kept informed of the number of calls they are making weekly and the length of these calls).

***Ask their parents to call them at a designated time each week/month if they are likely to speak to their parents frequently.***

A toll bar or pin number is a useful tool to bear in mind if they are making too many calls without your knowledge. Many use cell phones, which is easier for the host but they may need advice in budgeting time and money.

**Internet**

It is expected that your student will connect to your broadband.

***Our International students are often from countries where unlimited internet access is common place at home. We believe that the homestay fee received from the school should adequately contribute to an appropriate telecommunications package.***

If you are experiencing excessive bills from your telecommunication company you should address this with your student and make the manager of international services aware of the situation. The student is not expected to pay for this as a result but may contribute something in exceptional circumstances.

**Pets**

Many students will not be familiar with pets in our houses. Please ensure that if they are not fond of animals that they will not be unnecessarily bothered by them. On the other hand of course, they may love them.

**Family Rules**

Please explain family/house rules to your student carefully. Explain that you are responsible for them out of school hours and that you need to know of their whereabouts at all times. If he should be late, explain to him that he will need to ring you to let you know where he is and what transport arrangements he has made; whether he is taking a taxi home or you are picking him up.

It is *expected* that your student will normally be accompanied by another student or a host family member when they go anywhere.

The International Student Handbook outline might be useful as a talking point and written record for the student to refer to.

**School Rules**

It is expected that you will assist in communicating rules around uniform, attendance and adhering to school rules.

**Health and Personal Hygiene**

**Medical/Dental Care**

***Your student has Medical Insurance and will have filled out a medical form with all the necessary information.***

If your student becomes moderately or seriously ill, please contact the Homestay Co-ordinator or the Dean urgently so that appropriate information can be passed onto the student’s family.

The student can either visit your doctor or the school doctor at Roslyn Medical Centre (Brent Wishart).

***Centre Location***

***271 Highgate, Roslyn, DUNEDIN 9010***

***Phone: 03 477 6471***

***Fax: 03 479 2582***

***Email: roslynhealth@xtra.co.nz***

**Bathing and Showering**

Bathing and showering may also need to be explained. Normal bathing (in Japan) involves standing outside the bath and ladling the water over themselves – resulting in a very wet bathroom floor.

Most students will know how to take a bath or shower in western style, but because of their bathing habits they often use a lot of hot water.

Because some students will wonder why there are two taps, you will have to explain the hot water system, and that the water is normally too hot to be used without cold water as well. In Japan the hot water system usually operates on a gas califont ‘instant’ hot water system and you may find that the student has taken all your hot water and it has gone unused down the plughole. Explain that it is necessary to conserve hot water because it is expensive and you only have a limited quantity in a cylinder.

Communicate to them when you would prefer them to have a bath/shower so as it fits in with the needs of the rest of the Host family.

**Toilet**

Asian students will have used western style toilets.

**Nose Blowing**

Japanese consider it is very rude to blow their nose in public. It is even worse to use a fabric handkerchief and put it into the pocket. Have some tissues available. Students will usually clear out their noses in private in the bathroom and you will need to show them where to get rid of the tissue. If students catch a cold and are unable to blow their nose in private, they will sit politely and sniff. You will probably not be able to do much about this, as your nose blowing is as abhorrent to them as sniffing is to us.

**Laundry**

Please explain to your student your family arrangements here – where and when to put laundry out etc. Your student may be shy about leaving his underwear for you to wash. If he does, explain to him that there is nothing wrong in doing so. If he still wishes to do his own, explain to him that he needs to hang this outside on the clothesline.

**Remuneration**

The school pays the homestay provider $210 fortnightly per student. The school will pay half of the $210, if the student gives you two weeks notice that they have arranged to be away from your homestay or unless they have to be absent due to circumstances outside of their control. This should cover all living expenses, including internet, phone and food.

**Code of Practice for Pastoral Care of International Students**

Outlined below are our obligations as signatories to the Code of Practice for Pastoral Care of International Students, in relation to seeking out homestay providers. For more information please see: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Providers-and-partners/Code-of-Practice-NZQA.pdf>

**16 Homestays**

16.1 Signatories must have robust procedures for the selection and monitoring of homestay carers and homestay residences which are followed by signatories and any accommodation agent, including, but not limited to:

16.1.1 A determination that the homestay is not a boarding establishment;

16.1.2 An assessment of the homestay carer’s suitability;

16.1.3 An on-site assessment of the suitability of the residential facilities; and

16.1.4 An assessment of whether a homestay carer will provide a safe physical and emotional environment.

16.2 Signatories or their accommodation agents must establish a support infrastructure for homestay carers, and provide them with advice and information on best practice, so they can build their capability to provide high quality residential services to international students.

16.3 Signatories must meet with each student who is under the age of 18 at least quarterly to ensure that the homestay accommodation is suitable.

16.4 Signatories or their accommodation agents must visit each homestay with student/s who are under the age of 18 at least twice a year to ensure that the accommodation is suitable. Signatories must conduct follow-up visits if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the accommodation has become unsuitable.

**Who to contact if you need help**

**School:** **467-6620 Extension: 219**

**Guy Ferguson: 021907490** [**guy@mcglashan.school.nz**](mailto:guy@mcglashan.school.nz)

**International Student Manager**

**For any homestay or day to day matters please contact Guy Ferguson.**

**Richard Mountain: 0212360957** [**richard.mountain@mcglashan.school.nz**](mailto:richard.mountain@mcglashan.school.nz)

**ESOL Teacher**

**Dean of International Students**

**Anna Noble: 0211637471** [**anna.noble@mcglashan.school.nz**](mailto:anna.noble@mcglashan.school.nz)

**Director of International**

**Please only ring staff at home if it is holiday time or there is a problem you are dealing with that cannot wait until morning.**

***Thank you for hosting an international student. If you have any questions please get in contact with the International Department.***