



Homestays' and Designated Caregivers' Handbook

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SECTION A - Definitions and the Code of Practice

Christchurch Girls' High School has agreed to observe and be bound by the **Education Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students** published by the Minister of Education.

Copies of the Code are available on request from this institution or from the New Zealand Ministry of Education website at <http://www.education.govt.nz>.

As such, all international students enrolled at Christchurch Girls' High School must live in one of the following situations:

1. A homestay organised by Christchurch Girls' High School.
2. With a designated caregiver who must be either a blood relation or close family friend.
3. With a parent who holds a guardianship visa.

What is a guardian?

International students not living with a parent or designated caregiver must have a Christchurch based guardian who does not live in the homestay. This guardian must be aged 25 years or older and reside in New Zealand. This guardian may be employed through a Christchurch guardianship company or be a relative or friend of the parent.

What is a Homestay?

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

What is a Designated Care Giver (DCG)?

A "DCG" means a relative or close family friend designated in writing by the parents of an international student as the caregiver and accommodation provider for that student, but does not include establishment owner, manager, or employee.

SECTION B - Homestay / Designated Caregiver Requirements

Thank you for agreeing to share your home and family with a Christchurch Girls' High School International student. You (and they) will find it challenging and frustrating at times, but ultimately, we hope you find it rewarding and fulfilling and gain a life-long extended family member.

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

STUDENT ARRIVAL

When we place a student with you, you will be advised of the student's arrival date, their course start date, duration and any student details available, including any health information.

Your student will either be delivered to your home by their guardian, by their own agent, or by a CGHS staff member. Please be prepared, just in case, to help your student with such tasks as buying her school uniform and metro card, although her guardian will usually support her with these.

BEDROOM

This is your students' sanctuary when they need to be alone, so please make sure your children do not intrude. Students need to have their own bedroom and their own bed with all bed linen provided, including duvets or blankets. Sheets should be washed weekly. Each room needs a chest of drawers and a wardrobe supplied by the host family. A desk with a reading light and a chair for homework is also required for long-term students to study. A heater or heatpump is required as most cultures find our houses cold and under heated. Please be clear when discussing when / how to turn off. Please discuss with students that any electric blankets must be turned off before going to sleep, as they are dangerous to have on overnight. If in doubt about heating, students can use a hot-water bottle.

Remember, all teenagers of all cultures struggle to have a clean and tidy room, so if you have any specific rules such as 'No eating in your bedroom', be sure to clearly explain these rules **before** any issues arise.

HOUSEKEEPING

As a member of the family, students should assist with some minimal household tasks if asked to do so. It is part of our job, and yours, to help the student to become a well-adjusted adult, so that by the time they graduate from high school, they are prepared to go flatting. If your own children help around the house, so should the student. Please show your student where to put their dirty laundry, as laundry should be done by one of the home-stay parents. Some students prefer to do their own laundry, but before they do, please ensure that the student knows how to use the machine and where to hang their washing.

WATER AND BATHROOM

Please tell your student that hot water in New Zealand is expensive and agree with them how long they should spend in the shower each day (No longer than 5-10 minutes is usual).

Students should be made aware not to place too much toilet paper or any objects in the toilet as it may become blocked. It may be wise to place a small bin next to the toilet for any sanitary items and explain to your student what goes where.

Host families should explain how the shower and other facilities work, and if any windows are expected to be opened or surfaces to be dried afterwards. The student is expected to provide their own soap or body wash, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste and all other personal toiletries.

ELECTRICAL GOODS

New Zealand electricity is 240 volts so students may need to use transformers on any electrical appliances they bring here. Please check this carefully **BEFORE** you let the student plug anything in.

MEALS

Homestays / designated caregivers are not required to cook any special food for international students, except in the case of allergies, but a talk about what food the student likes and dislikes may be helpful. Be clear with house rules, for example eating out of the family fruit bowl, not eating in bedrooms etc.

Monday to Friday - please provide breakfast, a healthy school lunch, after school snacks and an evening meal.

Saturday and Sunday - please provide breakfast, lunch, an evening meal and snacks as per normal family arrangements.

Do not 'hide' food, or reserve food for your family. This is a common complaint that really upsets students.

If you take your student out for lunch or dinner, 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 your student who pays.

You must make suitable arrangements for the student if your family is to be away from home for a meal.

Students must let you know in advance about whether they will be home for a meal or not, and must comply with any host-family's important plans for meals out to celebrate special occasions etc. They must tell you **in person** where they are going (address), what time they will be home and leave a contact phone number (in case of urgent messages). No student is allowed to stay away from the host family / designated caregiver's home overnight without the consent of the family.

CURFEW

Students are not usually permitted to stay over at a friend's house Sunday - Thursday nights, or have a friend to stay over with them Sunday - Thursday unless it is during the holidays. All arrangements made must have the permission of the host family. Any variations of these arrangements must have the parents'/ guardian's permission.

Students under 18 should not be going to parties, unless you are sure no alcohol is involved. If you are sure, and allow them to go, the student must give you all the details (Please double-check).

Students between the ages of 16 and 18 will want to be out after midnight. This needs to be specifically arranged beforehand, with all details, including transport, checked. Again, no alcohol is allowed.

Students aged 18 still need to have approval of their caregiver as to where they are going, with whom and how they will get home and by when.

TRANSPORT

Please drive your student to school and pick them up on their first day at Christchurch Girls' High School. Students new to New Zealand find our buses confusing.

Most students are expected to walk or bus to school after their first day. Please teach your student how to bus from your house to school and back again, how to read the bus timetable, where to buy bus tickets and where all the bus stops are.

From time to time you will be expected to pick up or drop off your student as you would for your other family members. Extra transport requirements and care may be necessary for students. Some of the students may have tuition or a co-curricular practice session after school, which may require them to be collected after their lesson. Please ensure arrangements have been made for their safe transport home. (This is of particular concern to us during the winter months when it is cold and dark).

All students are responsible for paying their own transport costs to and from school, and socially, except for when they need the occasional ride in the family vehicle.

Students at Christchurch Girls' High School must not drive a vehicle without a current New Zealand Driving Licence and must have a school permit to bring the vehicle to school.

Students may only be driven by the homestay family / designated caregiver's family or a driver approved by the homestay family / designated caregiver's family, or a school staff member. (An approved driver must have a full New Zealand licence, be known to the family and be reliable). Homestay / caregiver parents must check licenses. No overseas licenses are acceptable. International Students caught driving outside of these conditions could have their student visa revoked.

TIME AWAY FROM HOME

If a student is to stay away from their designated caregiver or school-arranged homestay overnight for any reason, the caregiver / homestay must inform the students' guardian and the school and use their discretion to ensure a reliable adult will provide proper supervision for the student. If you cannot find a suitable adult, then please give at least 2 weeks' notice to the school so we can find a temporary home for the student and inform the student's guardian. No student is to be left unsupervised overnight at any stage, regardless of their age.

International students are encouraged to travel in term breaks with their host family or with organised groups through school, however, if a student plans to travel around New Zealand or overseas, either with you, or with others, they must get their parent's permission in writing, fill in a 'Travel Details' form and give it to the International Student Liaison, **at least 2 weeks before the date they start travelling.**

This travel should not be during term time, but if this travel is absolutely unavoidable, students must write a letter to the school Principal, asking for her express permission. Failure to do so could result in the student's visa being revoked.

Homestay payments are paid to the homestay family as per usual if a student travels away from the homestay family during the term breaks. This is to ensure the student retains exclusive use of the room and to respect their privacy.

If a homestay family invites a student on holiday, the student is expected to pay the family the transport costs of the trip in addition to the fortnightly homestay accommodation fee, (which covers accommodation costs and all meals). Any optional activities such as jet boating or hot pools entry on holiday or day trips should be paid for by the student. Please check with the student if their insurance covers any extreme activities. There are tour companies that Christchurch Girls' High School International Office approves during each holiday. All tours are available from the International Liaison.

We strongly advise students to return home for the summer holidays. Any arrangements made for the student and their belongings between the end of one academic year and the start of another is the responsibility of the parents and guardian. If a student is going to return to the same homestay after the summer holiday break, she must make arrangements regarding the storage of her belongings with her homestay and/or guardian before leaving. This may involve negotiating a storage fee. The school accepts no responsibility for the belongings of the student during or outside the academic year.

If a student's family come to New Zealand to visit, homestays are not required to accommodate them, however they may enter into a private arrangement if they wish to do so.

TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Students should negotiate with their homestays for a reasonable amount of time to be on a home computer, or personal I-pad or laptop. It is not appropriate for students to be shut off in their rooms using social media for hours. Cellphone use can be a real problem, impacting negatively on school, and family life. Lights should be out at midnight at the latest (including computers / laptops and iPhones). Students fall asleep at school otherwise. This often causes arguments in families, and problems at school. Get the International Liaison involved if there are any issues.

All students are told before they arrive that not all NZ households have internet access. This is not a requirement but a luxury provided by the host family. Internet facilities are available at Christchurch Girls' High School in the library for all students to use during interval and lunchtime.

If the family allows the student to use their internet, the homestay and student must come to an agreement about whether the student will pay for any internet charges incurred by the family on behalf of the student. If a student wants internet and you do not have it, then the student will need to pay for it to be installed and pay the monthly bill, with the homestay's permission, or pay a monthly amount agreed upon by the host family and the student.

Students are to respect the host family's rules regarding the use of the home telephone. The student must pay for the full cost of any toll calls made.

Students are responsible for paying for their own cell-phone accounts. Most students arrive with their own cell-phone, please help with buying a new SIM card if required. The school is not responsible for any unpaid bills, toll calls or internet charges. It is the host family's responsibility to ensure appropriate controls and procedures are in place to recover these amounts from the student.

HEALTH CONCERNS AND EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

International students must have appropriate and current medical and travel insurance while studying in New Zealand. Any student needing medical assistance needs to pay for their own treatment at time of treatment (not host parents) and claim for the expenses through their own policy. International students are advised to always carry their insurance card in their wallets or a photo of their insurance details in their phone.

The Accident Compensation Corporation provides accident insurance for all New Zealand citizens, residents and temporary visitors to New Zealand, but students may still be liable for all other medical and related costs. Further information can be viewed on the ACC website at <http://www.acc.co.nz>.

If a student becomes ill, they should be taken to the homestay family's / designated caregiver's own doctor. If the student would prefer to see a doctor who speaks their own language, the homestay family should inform the student's guardian, who will find one for the student. If the student is missing school on account of sickness, the homestay / designated caregiver must ring the school on 03 348 0849 by 8.30am to explain that the student will be absent. If no contact is made, the student will be marked truant. If the student is absent for more than 3 days a medical certificate must be produced.

In the case of a medical emergency, international students should be taken to the nearest hospital or emergency clinic, and the International Liaison should be notified immediately on 027 279 9002. If you cannot reach either the student's guardian or the International Liaison, you can contact the school's acting principal, Mr Peter Sawyer on 027 3000 405.

In case of an earthquake, all homestays and designated caregivers must have an emergency survival kit prepared. You can find details of what to include at <http://getthru.govt.nz>. Homestays should talk with students in advance about what to do if an earthquake strikes while the student is at school, home or elsewhere. You should talk about where you will meet, and how the student will get home. (The buses may not be running, the cell-phone network may be down)

RELIGION / CHURCH

Students come from many cultures and religions and this should be respected. If students wish to attend church, they should feel free to do so. Please introduce them to a suitable parish and show them the bus routes. If your family is religious, encourage the student to share the experience of going to church, but don't push. It is often very difficult and embarrassing for students to say 'no' when pressed to attend church if their beliefs are different.

SCHOOL

Most students are in New Zealand to complete their education, not to develop their social lives. Check the goals of the student when they arrive to help you understand their daily routine better.

A student attending Christchurch Girls' High School must abide by the starting and finishing times of the school. Please read the school newsletter so you are aware of holidays etc.

A short-term student has different expectations than a long-term student, for a long-term student, make sure to set up a regular contact time with the student's parents, to keep the student's morale high and make sure the student is on track. The school will email out Learning Engagement Feedback reports to guardians and homestays every 5 weeks. Students should be able to have fun while still attempting homework, assignments and exams. Please encourage regular and steady homework habits and don't be afraid to ask what they are doing at school or for homework.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Discuss with your student how your family greets each other in the morning, says goodnight etc. 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 is normal affection for us. Girls can also feel uneasy if left alone in the house with male family members. To avoid any possible problems or misunderstanding for the men in your house, please make sure female students 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 signs of affection for us can cause embarrassment for them).

Please remember most problems occur through cultural differences and not bad behaviour, so communication can go a long way to solving many potential problems. This, and sensitivity to your student's personality will help you bridge those cultural barriers to help form a strong international family relationship. Treat the student as you would want your own son or daughter to be treated overseas and you will get it right 99% of the time.

DAMAGE TO BELONGINGS

If the student damages the property of the family, the student will be responsible for the cost of repairs, unless the damage is covered by the family's insurance policy, in which case any excess cost will be covered by the homestay.

If a member of the host family damages the student's property, the family will be responsible for the cost of repairing that property, unless the damage is covered by the student's insurance policy, in which case, any excess cost will be covered by the student.

It is the host family's responsibility to ensure they have adequate insurance cover for any damage caused by the student to their property. Christchurch Girls' High School does not accept any responsibility for any losses or damage to property or persons caused or suffered as a result of home stay accommodation.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

All parents and students have signed a contract agreeing to abide by all school rules and policies. Students who are not abiding by the school rules will be dealt with through Christchurch Girls' High Schools' disciplinary procedure. If there is no improvement in behaviour, or if the student's situation becomes serious, the student's visa may be revoked and the student may be sent back to their home country. Below are some examples;

- Illegal activities (drugs, shoplifting, theft)
- Bullying, violence or aggression
- Habitual truancy
- Emotional imbalance (depression, anxiety)
- Dietary problems (bulimia, anorexia)
- Serious health concerns (self-harm)
- Dishonesty/untrustworthiness
- Inability/unwillingness to comply with school and homestay rules.
- Inappropriate and unsafe social behaviour.
- Driving without a license or being driven by an unapproved driver.

STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Stationery / Workbooks costs
 - Any personal toiletries or cosmetics
 - Personal pocket money and personal expenses
 - Bus fares
 - Exam fees
 - Holiday costs
 - Medical/dental expenses
 - Cell-phone / internet accounts
 - Major overuse of electricity / heating charges (with proof of charge / receipt)
 - Uniforms
 - Losses and theft of student property (A police report may be necessary for insurance.)
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Transfer of Homestay / Designated Caregiver

All residents residing at that accommodation for 5 or more consecutive nights in the Designated Caregiver's / Homestay's home aged 18 and over are required to undertake a Police vet. This must be rechecked every three years.

The School must be informed of any changes in the homestay's living situation well in advance. If any new persons over the age of 18 come to live in the household, the International Liaison must be notified at least 2 weeks on advance, as they will need to be police vetted.

The school does not guarantee that the International Student will remain with the Host Family for the full time intended. Ten weeks' notice is required by the student if they wish to leave a homestay for personal reasons. If a homestay family cannot continue to provide accommodation, they must also give 10 weeks' notice to allow Christchurch Girls' High School to find a new homestay for the student.

If a problem arises between the Student and the Homestay family, the matter should be referred to Christchurch Girls' High School's International Liaison, who will meet with the necessary parties to attempt to solve the problem.

If the problem cannot be resolved and there is a state of incompatibility between the host family and the student, notice of one week shall be given by the International Liaison to allow new accommodation arrangements to be made. No student is to move without the prior consent of the Christchurch Girls' High School International Liaison. Student visas may be withdrawn if a student moves without notice.

Christchurch Girls' High School reserves the right to move a student without prior notice if the student is too embarrassed or uncomfortable to stay once the decision is made by the International Liaison for her to move, or if the International Liaison deems that the homestay fails to meet the school's requirements of pastoral care for the student. In cases such as these, a 1 week payment in lieu of notice will be given to the homestay.

The school will not be responsible for any losses suffered by the homestay family if the student decides to leave the Homestay family before the agreed date, nor will the school be responsible for finding a replacement student for the family if this occurs. No compensation will be paid to the family by the school, the student, or the student's parents.

Specific to Designated Caregivers:

The student's parents have placed their child in your care. Christchurch Girls' High School MUST be informed prior to any change to this arrangement.

The parents take full responsibility and accept the decisions made by you about the day-to-day requirements of their child. Christchurch Girl's High School accepts no responsibility for the student's day-to-day care when the student is in the care of the homestay or designated caregiver.

Should there be a concern about the welfare of your student, the school will discuss the concern with you and the parents of the student. The school may also refer the matter to the New Zealand Police or any other appropriate welfare or outside agencies. If necessary, the school may relocate the student to an approved homestay if any issues cannot be resolved.

Christchurch Girls' High School will visit your home prior to enrolment in order to meet with you and establish a communication arrangement with you. The school will ensure that the selected accommodation is satisfactory. The school will have a discussion with your student regularly to monitor their on-going well-being.
