



# HOMESTAY STUDENT GUIDELINES

We hope that living with your homestay family will be an important part of your stay in New Zealand and a positive experience.

This booklet gives you information about living with a New Zealand family – what you can expect and what's expected of you. If there is something you do not understand then please ask your homestay family to explain.

## Contact

We will be in regular contact with you and your host family to make sure that everything is OK and to answer any questions. Please remember that it often takes a few weeks to settle in.

## What's included in your homestay

- Single room, bed, bedding and linen, desk, reading light, wardrobe or drawers
- All meals (sandwich lunch or similar), fruit, snacks etc.
- Laundry services
- Basic toiletries (soap, toilet paper). You MUST provide all other toiletries including toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, sanitary items etc.

## Rules and regulations for homestay

You must agree and keep to the rules of Lake Panorama Student Homestays, the school and host family.

Homestay Students are not permitted to:

- Drink Alcohol
- Smoke Cigarettes
- Take drugs
- Obtain weapons
- Drive or own a vehicle

The above are a serious breach of homestay rules

## Study

Your primary purpose in coming to New Zealand is to study and learn English. If you are having any problems at school, then please speak to your teachers.

### **Time with your homestay family**

Although you will need to spend time studying in your room, it is polite to spend time each evening with your homestay family.

Ensure you spend at least 20-30 minutes every day speaking English to your host family.

When you go to your bedroom for the night, say 'goodnight' to your homestay family and say, 'good morning' when you first see them in the morning. This is polite and is an important ritual in New Zealand. Remember to say 'please' and 'thank you' when something is done for you.

### **Participation in family life**

We encourage you to join in with family activities such as outings to the beach, walks, shopping, tourist attractions or a BBQ with friends. It's a good way for you to meet new people, make friends and practice English.

You should pay your own way on outings with the family (for example a trip to the cinema or zoo etc.).

### **Helping out and chores**

You must not treat your host family as a housemaid or taxi service.

In New Zealand families, every member of the household contributes to the household chores.

You will be asked to help around the house by: This varies from home to home but may include the following:

#### Daily Expectations

1. Make your own bed everyday
2. Make your own breakfast and clean up any mess you have made (put dishes in the dishwasher etc)
3. Make your own lunch and clean up any mess you have made
4. Take your lunch box out of school bag after school, and rinse
5. Help set and clear table for dinner
6. Help with dinner dishes
7. Clean up any mess after showering (i.e long hair in the shower, excess water on the floor/basin)
8. Hanging your wet towel up after use
9. Set Alarm and get yourself up in the mornings on time – it is your responsibility to ensure you get to school on time.

#### Weekly Expectations

1. Clean, tidy and vacuum your bedroom
2. Empty your own rubbish bin and put appropriate rubbish in recycling
3. Change your own sheets – your host parents will teach you how to do this
4. Put your dirty washing out regularly (your host family will show you)
5. Put your clean clothes neatly in drawers or wardrobe

Occasionally you may be asked to help with the following

1. Folding own washing
2. Putting the rubbish or recycling out on the curb
3. Helping to prepare a meal for the family with your host mum.

### **Inviting Friends to your home**

Students must always ask permission from host parents before inviting friends in to the home.

It is ok to invite friends to stay for a meal or to stay overnight BUT you must ALWAYS seek permission from your host parents first.

Overnight stays are only permitted on the weekends and during holidays and for no more than 2 nights.

### **Internet, Telephone and Computers**

All homes have internet. Please check with your host family how much Internet they have. In NZ Internet is expensive and most families will have a limited amount, so it may not be possible to download movies or stream TV. Sometimes you will have to pay a small charge each month (about \$20 per month).

DO NOT leave your computer on when you are not using it and turn it off at night.

DO NOT leave it charging during the day when you are at school or overnight when you are asleep. Laptops left on the bed can get hot and catch fire if left on.

On school nights – Sunday to Thursday Nights, there is to be no use of the internet or talking on mobile phones after 10pm.

Friday and Saturday Nights and you are allowed to use Internet later, please discuss this with your host family.

Local calls only are free in NZ. If you do not use Skype, WeChat or a similar communication app, we ask that you purchase an International Calling Card to call home. This is much cheaper than using the homestay phone.

All long-term International Students must have a local mobile telephone number – this is for your safety.

No Mobile phones at the dinner table.

### **Going out**

From Monday to Thursday you must be home by 5.30-6pm for dinner. If you have sporting activities or classes on after school, talk to your host parents. Also make sure that you talk to them about how you will be getting home from these activities.

On Friday and Saturday evenings students are allowed out later, providing they keep themselves safe.

This is at the discretion of your host parents.

**NO STUDENTS ARE PERMITTED TO BE WALKING THE STREET ALONE AFTER DARK**

When you go out you MUST tell your host parents where you are going, who you are going with and what time you will be home. The host family must know where you are at all times, this is for your own safety.

If your host family calls or texts you on your mobile phone, you must answer them or text them back immediately – again this is for your own safety.

If you are late or delayed on the way home, you must let your host family know so they do not worry about you.

It is your responsibility to ALWAYS have enough credit on your mobile phone and to have it charged when you are out of the house.

## **Food/meals**

Food in New Zealand will be different to the food in your home country. It may take some time to adjust but is all part of the experience.

Breakfast in NZ is usually including cereal, milk, toast, juice and fruit. It is rarely a hot meal.

Lunch in NZ usually includes foods like: filled rolls, sandwiches, fruit, chippies, energy bars, baking, yogurt, drink etc.

Dinner in NZ is a cooked meal. NZ families usually include Potato and Bread where International Students would be used to Rice. Dinner is a very important part of the day for a NZ family. This is when families come together to talk about their day and share their experiences of the day with their family members.

Your host family will provide 3 healthy meals each day and snacks. If you want to buy 'junk' food, it is your responsibility to purchase this.

Your family will teach you to help yourself to breakfast and lunch; remember to clean up after yourself. All food will be provided and teenagers in NZ usually make their own lunches to take with them to school.

Often students like to take leftovers from the previous night's dinner to school with them the next day. There are microwaves for reheating food and kettles at school to make hot drinks.

Please speak to your family about what food you like and don't like, and anything you can't eat (for religious, cultural or medical reasons).

If you are having a meal out with your friends let your host mother know by 3pm so she doesn't prepare an evening meal for you.

It's also a good idea to go food shopping with your host family when you first arrive.

Do not eat or keep food in your bedroom – this is unhygienic.

## **Health**

All students must have medical insurance, this is arranged for you by your school. Please check with school if you have any queries about doctor/hospital visits and prescriptions charges.

If you are sick and unable to attend school, you must tell your host parents, so they can let your school know you will be absent that day.

If you feel unwell at school, there are nurses at school, please see your Dean to arrange an appointment.

If you are homesick school can arrange for you to see a Guidance Counsellor.

## **Culture Shock**

When you first arrive, you will find life in NZ is very different and it will take time for you to adjust.

Culture shock is something that everyone who moves to a new country feels to some degree.

It is different for each person, but it is normal.

You may feel sad, lonely, upset or anxious.

Please talk to your homestay family, homestay coordinator, teachers, parents in China and friends, they will help support you and soon you will be enjoying life in NZ.

Remember that everyone is going through the same thing, so help each other.

Please read this article to help understand what you may experience.

<http://kidshealth.org/en/teens/culture-shock.html?WT.ac=ctg>

## **Bathroom/showering**

New Zealand's bathroom and toileting habits may be very different from what you are used to. Here toilet paper is flushed down the toilet. Your host family will show you how to use the shower and where to put your towels. **Do not** hang your towel or wet underwear in the wardrobe.

Please keep your showers short; you should spend only 5-10 minutes in the shower. This is to ensure there is enough hot water for everyone in the home.

You are not allowed to dye your hair in the homestay family house.

## **Bedrooms/bedding**

If you are not sure about the bedding talk to your host family and get them to show you. They will help you when changing the sheets and pillow cases for the first few times. If you are cold, please tell your host parents and they will give you extra blankets.

Your host family will provide a heater in your bedroom for the winter months, you must NOT leave the heater on overnight when you are sleeping or during the day when you are away from home. This is for safety reasons.

When you leave a room, please remember to turn the lights off.

No students of the opposite sex are ever allowed in each other's bedrooms. If a member of the opposite sex comes to visit, host parents must be at home and they are only allowed in communal areas like the lounge or dining room.

## **Clothes washing**

In most family's clothes washing is done once or twice a week. Please ensure you give your host parent your washing or put it in the laundry basket. If you are running out of clothes and need something washed urgently, please speak to your host parent.

## **Transport**

Your family will take you to and from school on the first day and help you get used to the buses and trains.

Check out the Auckland Transport Website – [www.at.govt.nz](http://www.at.govt.nz)

## **Changing homestay**

Sometimes things just don't work out. Please tell us if you are unhappy so that we can help you. You have to give two weeks' notice if you need to move.

## **PASSPORT**

**It's important that you keep your passport in a safe place at all times – do not carry it around with you.**

## Money

We recommend that you open a bank account when you arrive in NZ and have an eftpos card.

Please do not carry large amounts of money around with you. We recommend that you have no more than \$20 in your wallet during the school week.

- Do not pay any money directly to the family.
- Do not ask your family to act as guarantor for you to buy any items like stereos, computers, mobile phones, Musical instruments etc.
- Do not lend money to anyone.

## Helpful Websites to prepare for you NZ experience:

<http://www.newzealand.com/int/travel-guide/>

<http://www.aucklandnz.com/discover/essential-information>

<http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/personal-community/keeping-safe>

<http://www.education-newzealand.org/about-new-zealand/>

We are here to help so please ring us and if we are out, leave a message and we will contact you. Or you can talk to the International Office at school and they will contact us for you.