



SWIS



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HOMESTAY HANDBOOK

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WELCOME TO HOSTING AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT!

Tēnā kōwhiri, Konnichiwa, As-salāmu 'alaykum, Hola, Nǐ hǎo, Annyeonghaseyo, and Hello!

Hosting an international student is a special opportunity to share your home, culture, and everyday life. These differences are what make the experience so rewarding for both your family and your student.

Our biggest rule of thumb for care of our international students is *"How would I want my own child to be treated in another country?"*

International students come to New Zealand to improve their English, experience a new culture, and grow in independence. For many, this is their first time away from home, so your support plays a vital role in their success.

He whānau kotahi tātou - We are one family



PREPARING TO HOST

Before your student arrives:

- read their profile (interests, allergies, preferences)
- learn a little about their culture
- make contact with the student and their family if possible - video call or email
- share information and photos of your home and family
- get to know the SWIS International Student Coordinator. They are your first point of contact for all homestay matters and are there to give you advice and support.



YOUR ROLE AS HOMESTAY FAMILY

As a homestay family, you agree to:

- welcome the student as part of your family
- provide daily meals, a comfortable room, and daily care
- include them in family life and activities
- set clear, fair expectations and routines
- stay in regular contact with the school.



You are responsible for your student's wellbeing at all times, including knowing where they are and who they are with.



FIRST DAYS

- Welcome them warmly.
- Offer food and show them around your home.
- Help them contact home to confirm safe arrival.
- Explain household routines clearly and simply.
- Allow time to rest and adjust.
- Show your student around your area and practice getting to SWIS.
- SWIS will hold an orientation session for the student, and give them their uniform and stationery.

Be patient - everything will feel new and unfamiliar at first.



BUILDING A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

- Communicate clearly and simply.
- Speak slowly and check understanding.
- Be patient and supportive.
- Be open to cultural differences.
- Encourage your student to participate in family life and share their culture.

Hosting is rewarding, but it can also take time and patience as everyone adjusts.





DAILY LIFE AT HOME

Meals

- Provide three meals a day and snacks.
- Be flexible with cultural preferences.
- Food can be a source of comfort - encourage sharing and cooking together.

Expectations

- Explain routines (meals, chores, laundry, internet use).
- We suggest showering to be completed by 9pm and video calling/talking by 10.30pm.
- Encourage participation in household life.
- Encourage conversations about cultural differences - you will all learn a lot!

Accommodation

Your student's room should be:

- clean, warm, and private (own room)
- furnished with a bed, storage, and study space
- equipped with heating and access to power
- supported by working smoke alarms.

Internet & Communication

- Students need regular contact with family.
- Agree on reasonable times for calls and internet use.
- Ensure access to Wi-Fi.





CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT & WELLBEING

It can be a big culture shock adjusting to life in a new country, along with any communication difficulties they may have. Each student will react differently depending on age, life experiences, culture, expectations and personality.

Students may experience:

- culture shock
- homesickness
- tiredness or withdrawal.

Support them by:

- being patient and reassuring
- keeping communication open
- encouraging friendships and activities
- allowing some private time while encouraging engagement
- homesickness is normal and usually passes with time
- contacting the school if you have concerns.



SAFETY & SUPERVISION

- Always know where your student is.
- No overnight stays without approval and vetting.
- Inform the school of any travel or changes at home.
- Ensure your student understands emergency procedures (e.g. calling 111).





SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to:

- attend school every day
- participate fully in all classes
- complete homework and assessments
- follow school and homestay rules.

Encourage involvement in sports, clubs, and activities to help them settle and make friends.



RULES & LEGAL EXPECTATIONS

Students must follow:

- New Zealand law
- School rules
- Homestay family rules.

Strictly prohibited:

- drugs, alcohol (under 18), smoking
- driving or hitchhiking
- visiting bars or clubs.

Any serious breaches may result in the student being sent home.





HEALTH & MEDICAL CARE

- Students have medical insurance.
- Inform the school of any serious illness or injury.
- Seek medical care when needed and keep records for insurance.

Contact the school immediately in serious situations.



TRAVEL & OVERNIGHT STAYS

- All travel requires prior approval.
- Independent travel requires written consent from parents and school.
- Overnight stays must be approved and supervised.

Safety and supervision are always the priority.





IF ISSUES ARISE

Sometimes challenges occur. If they do:

- communicate early with the school
- work together to find solutions
- seek support when needed.

We are here to help ensure a positive experience for everyone.



SAYING GOODBYE

Saying farewell can be emotional. Many families build lasting relationships.

Take time to celebrate the experience and the connections made.



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

SWIS International Coordinator:
Hayley Trenwith



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The International Coordinator is your first point of contact for all matters.

SWIS Principal:
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