

St Mary's College
11 New Street, Ponsonby,
AUCKLAND 1011



Homestay Information Pack
2017

LIVING WITH A KIWI FAMILY

You will probably find many differences between living in New Zealand and living in your country. It's important to keep an open mind, and remember that it takes time to adapt. If you are confused about something, make sure you ask your host family or Mrs King for help. Mrs King will interview you each term to make sure you are happy with your accommodation.

Showering

In New Zealand, we wash ourselves inside the shower or bath, not on the floor. Hot water is expensive in New Zealand, and if you take too long the person after you might have a cold shower! Your host family may ask you to limit your showers to no longer than 10 minutes.

Sleeping

Your host family will probably go to bed a lot earlier than you are used to (often 10.00pm or 11.00pm). If you are going to stay up later, please be quiet and try not to disturb your host family. Remember that we sleep between the sheets, and not on top of the blankets!

Communication

Remember, you need to speak English as often as you can! Tell your host family if you are going out, and when you will be home so that they do not worry about you. They will tell you the latest time you can come home. Please give your host family a contact phone number if you visit a friend.

Cultural Differences

New Zealanders are quite casual and informal. We usually address people by their first name instead of using titles like 'Mr' and 'Mrs' (however, you must use these titles for your teachers). It is polite to look people in the eyes when you are talking to them, to say 'please' when you ask someone for something, and 'thank you' when somebody gives you something, or does something for you. You should not wear your shoes inside unless your host family are happy with this. It is impolite to talk about money and age. Your host family may ask you to blow your nose with a tissue instead of sniffing. It is considered impolite to spit in public, and you should cover your mouth when you yawn,

Food

Breakfast in New Zealand is usually an informal meal, consisting of toast and/or cereal etc. Lunch is also usually informal, and is usually cold (sandwiches, salad etc). You may have to prepare your own breakfast and lunch, but your host family will show you what to do. Dinner is the main meal of the day, and is usually a hot meal eaten between 6.00pm – 7.00pm with the whole family. Some students find New Zealand food quite bland. Do not be afraid to ask your host family for extra seasoning or sauces. Your host family should provide you with three meals per day, plus snacks. Talk with your host family about meal sizes – whether you have too much food or not enough food.

Money

It is not safe to carry large amounts of cash with you. If you need help to open a bank account, please ask your host family or the International Student Manager to help you. You may have to pay for extra things, such as special activities or holidays with your host family – they will give you a choice.

Heating

Your host family should provide a heater for your bedroom, but please turn it off before you go to bed, and when you are not in the room. Many New Zealanders will wear extra clothes instead of turning on the heating.

Jobs around the house

Your host family may ask you to help with chores such as washing the dishes after dinner. You need to keep your bedroom tidy. Your host family may do your laundry for you, or you may prefer to do it yourself.

Internet and Telephone

Your host family will tell you the rules for using the Internet. You may be asked to pay a weekly fee if you want to use the internet. Please do not download movies, TV shows, or music without permission from your host family. You can also use the computers at school to check your emails.

Transport

Depending on where you live, you might walk, catch a bus, or get a ride to school. You will have to pay for your own transport costs. Your host family will show you how to catch the bus and explain how to buy a ticket.

Alcohol and Tobacco Laws

It is illegal for a student under the age of 18 years old to purchase alcohol or cigarettes.



"I studied at St Mary's for over two years and liked my homestay and how close the school was to the city. I got to choose subjects I liked and the teachers were very kind and supported me to achieve all the qualifications I needed to study in Japan and am now at Chuo University in Tokyo studying Bachelor of Arts, Psychology" **Satoka Inoue , Japan**

STUDENT HOMESTAY RULES

All families have rules, some are more important than others. Your family may have some special rules. You need to talk about these rules with your family and complete any chores that you are responsible for when required.

Be a part of the family. Respect them and be friendly. You will be treated the same way. Do not stay in your room for long periods of time as it is important to mix with the family.

Obey the curfew rules set by the host parents and your family. Tell your host family where you are going and what you are doing. If you are not coming home for a meal, please advise your host before 5:00 pm or earlier and leave a note with a telephone contact number and address if you are going to someone's house.

There is to be no overnight sleepovers unless you have permission from the homestay and no friends sleeping over without permission from both families.

Respect the home and personal property of the family. There are to be no visitors to the house unless the host family has been advised first.

Always ask before borrowing or using any household items. Inform your host parents if something is damaged or broken. You do not pay for accidental damage but you should replace something if you have been careless.

Help to keep your home safe and secure. Lock windows and doors, switch off heaters and electrical appliances when not in use.

You will be asked to sign a document as an understanding of these rules for a successful homestay experience.

Enjoy!

St Mary's College provides a caring environment with a dedicated team of International staff offering 24 hour support.



Ms Suey Bignall – Homestay Coordinator & International Support
+64 9 3766568 ext 817
Mob: +64 27 3000366
sbignall@stmaryak.school.nz

Ms Suey is the **Homestay Coordinator** who arranges homestay accommodation with approved families. She can help with any homestay issues and ensures each student is happy at home.



Sue King – International Student Director
Tel: +64 9 376 6568 ext 817
Mob: +64 21 157 8776
sking@stmaryak.school.nz

Mrs Sue King is the **Director** of International Students and manages all student welfare including communications with the students' families or agents. Please make sure you have Mrs King's number in your phone for an emergency.

HOMESTAY FEE CONDITIONS 2017

1. If a student moves out of a homestay before the end of the contract, the portion of the homestay fees not already used will be refunded. The Homestay Placement Fee cannot be refunded.
2. The 2017 home stay charge is NZ\$280.00 per week plus a one-off placement fee of NZ\$300.00. The homestay fee includes three daily meals, laundry facilities, and a warm bedroom with study facilities and internet useage (although please note that a small internet useage fee can be charged at an additional \$10 per week in some circumstances because of the high internet costs or homestay internet package). A homestay administration fee of \$300.00 per year will be charged.
3. Homestay changes can only be made with the approval of the International Director. Two weeks' notice, in writing/email or \$560.00 is paid to the host family regardless if the student moves out prior to the two week notice period. Homestay placement fees of \$300.00 apply to each new homestay.
4. Homestay Retainer Fee. This is payable when the student leaves at the end of the year and wants to "Hold" their room until they return to NZ. They are to give two weeks' notice (or \$560.00) and then \$50 a week is charged up to a maximum of \$250.00. Student's belongings can be stored out of the room in another part of the house if the homestay wants use the room or belongings can be stored in the school garage for no charge. If the student moves out completely there is no retainer fee paid (but two weeks' notice of \$560.00 still needs to be given).
5. Homestay families are paid \$280.00 per week during term break holidays. If the student leaves during term time or during the term holidays for longer than two weeks, the homestay family are paid two week's payment (\$560.00) then \$50 after that (to a maximum of \$250.00 or five weeks).