



## WHAKATĀNE HIGH SCHOOL

**Welcome to the Whakatāne High School International Student family**

### **Information for Host Families**

#### ***School hours:***

School hours are 8.30am - 3pm ( Mon, Wed & Friday) 8.45am - 3pm (Tues & Thursday) **Interval** is 10.45 - 11.15. **Lunchtime** is 12.45pm - 1.30pm.

#### ***Absences:***

If your student is ill or away from school for any other reason, please contact the school office through the following avenues. Could you please give your name & number, student's name, length of absence and reason.

**Phone (07) 3088251 or Email - [absent@whakatanehigh.school.nz](mailto:absent@whakatanehigh.school.nz)**

**Or through the Whakatāne High School website - Report an Absence**

#### ***Medical Appointments:***

The School Doctor is available on Tuesdays; the School Nurse is available Mon, Tues, Thurs and Friday; the School Counsellors are available every day. All these services through school are free and appointments must be made at the Student Office.

If your student requires attention from your doctor/dentist, the appointment/treatment must be paid for at the time and then claimed on the student's Insurance. This reimbursement is only paid into a NZ bank account, so if the student doesn't have one, it would be paid to your bank account. The same process applies if hospital treatment is required, unless it is an ACC claim. If your student requires treatment from a Physiotherapist, Osteopath or Chiropractor, they must be referred through a GP to ensure ACC can be claimed if appropriate. If you are unable to take your student to appointments, please let us know so we can help.

**Please inform the Homestay Coordinator, Lena Loeffelsender, or the International Director, Declan Manning, if your student is admitted to hospital seriously injured or ill. Lena Loeffelsender #0272876570 or Declan Manning # 0277799447**

### ***Insurance Claims:***

Many of our students are insured with our Insurance cover we offer for International Students. Students can usually claim for many things under their policy. It covers not only medical issues, but also loss of property, for damage to your property and so on. If you have any questions regarding insurance claims, please get in touch with Declan Manning.

### ***Student Sleepovers & Payments:***

Many of our International students buddy up and often sleepover at other host family homes with their friends. If organised and under 7 days, we ask that families be aware of whether these arrangements are reciprocal or are they a bit one-sided? It has been suggested by experienced host families that, **if it is** not reciprocal, please send some food with your student - like a loaf of bread, bottle of milk, packet of sausages, tin of spaghetti etc.

If the stay is organised and over 7 days, the school will arrange for the homestay payment to be diverted to the temporary family if required. The reimbursement to the temporary caregiver host family will be at \$20.00 per night. Half of the \$40 p/n payment as the balance will still be paid to the host family to 'hold' the students' place.

Alternatively, if a family needs to go away and it's not appropriate to take their student, we can arrange alternative accommodation. ***In all instances, please contact the Homestay Coordinator or the Director only. (Do not contact our Executive Officer please.)***

### ***Student Trip Gear:***

If your student is going on a school trip/South Island trip and requires specialist equipment such as snow gear, backpacks, sleeping bags, wetsuits etc, please let us know as it can sometimes be borrowed. If you don't have or can't access this gear, we will try and help.

We have an "Internationals Whakatane High School" Instagram Group which anyone can join. We use this page as a way for natural parents to see our beautiful town, advertising local events etc. Families/students can send photos to the Homestay Coordinator to upload. To find us you need to search in Instagram for "whsinternational.students" and ask to join.

### ***Whakatane High School App***

This app is free to download and is handy to have because it is used for cancellations and postponements of events such as Cross country etc. You can also access the Absentee line.

### ***What's App Messenger Group***

For easier communication, we will ask Host parents and Students to download a messenger App called What's App. Once Downloaded, the Homestay Coordinator will add you to our closed groups. There is one for the Families and one for the students. This way we can communicate important upcoming dates faster.

## ***Living with a student***

### ***Before your student arrives:***

Once you have a student allocated to you, it is a good idea to email to your student and their parents. Your email can introduce your family, explain who is at home, what your interests are, work etc. The school will send out a basic profile of your family to the student with most of the above information outlined; however, it is much more personal if you can do the same. You could include photos of yourselves and welcome your new family member. **Include a commitment to the parents that you will look after their child. Your letter can do much to allay the fears of both student and parent prior to their arriving and can start their stay off on a positive note.**

### ***When your student arrives:***

Our international students arrive either by shuttle from Tauranga Airport, delivered directly to your home or to WHS if arriving in a Group. Some arrive at Whakatane Airport. We will let you know your student's travel and arrival details. The Homestay Coordinator will be at Whakatane airport and the school to greet the Student(s) with you. Some organisations offer Orientations either in Sydney or Auckland. If your student has participated in that, they will be less jet-lagged. Your student will arrive feeling tired, anxious, excited and probably overwhelmed by first impressions of their new Country. Everything will seem new and now is not a good time for the Tour of the Town or introductions to lots of people. These can all wait until the student has had a rest.

A warm welcome, a light meal and a quick tour of the house will be enough for the first evening. The student will need this time to settle in, unpack and personalise their room.

A small gift left in their room (a Diary, a Kiwiana Keyring or similar), a bus timetable, tourist information booklet and small map would be a nice touch. If you've put up a noticeboard, encourage your student to put up some pictures of their loved ones. It will provide them with a sense of Welcome. Your student will probably want a hot shower and an early night the first night.

Once the student has had a good sleep you can start the familiarisation process, explain your expectations etc. Over the next two weeks give the student lots of opportunities to ask questions, but also make a point of repeating your instructions and check out their understanding by observing their behaviour.

Rather than ask if the student has understood you (they will tend to say 'yes' regardless), try and ask them to repeat the instruction or show you their understanding. Explain that you are available to show them again, then remember to offer - don't always wait to be asked.

Make sure your student has a copy of your home phone number and the address, in case they get lost before they have memorised them. A contact phone number for you at work will be reassuring too. Show them how to lock the door (and how the alarm works) and let them know what time you leave for work in the morning. Let your student know what time you usually eat dinner and that you expect them to be home before then or to let you know.

If your student's understanding of written English is markedly better than their spoken English, they might appreciate having important instructions and expectations written down too.

### ***Getting ready for school:***

If your student arrives during the week before term starts it is a good idea to visit the school, show them the bus, biking or walking route and the school grounds.

On the first day of term your student is expected to be at the main admin building at 8.35am. The first few days your student may need to be taken to and from school, until they become more confident in taking the bus or walking to and from school.

The school will arrange an orientation programme for the student on the first 2 days. This will include a powhiri to which you are invited as well. The students will be given information about subjects, sports and extracurricular activities. They will meet the prefects (leadership students) and other staff who will introduce their subjects or services. This includes the guidance team, sports coordinator and nurse. The student's timetables are made up, based on subjects selected by the students before arrival. However, a staff member will sit down with each student and finalise the timetable. The students can ask the international director to make changes during the first two weeks.

### ***Adjusting to New Zealand:***

When the student first arrives, they are likely to think everything in New Zealand, your city, your home and the school is wonderful. Don't expect this state to last. Everything may go from seeming wonderful to seeming awful. Your student is suffering from culture shock. It comes from the effort of adjusting every day to all the small differences in their lives. With support from you, Whakatane High School staff and their friends, this stage will pass too, and they'll be more realistic, some things in New Zealand will be great and there'll be things from home that they miss.

It is important to remember that these stages are normal and are the result of adjusting to new circumstances, neither you nor your student should blame themselves.

#### **Stages of culture shock**

- o Everything is wonderful.
- o Everything is awful.
- o Most things are ok and the student is coping.

You can help by talking with the student about their home, customs, family etc and asking about what they notice as differences. Encourage your student to see the differences as neither better or worse, just different.

### ***Food:***

## **Asian Students**

Although the ubiquitous hamburger and fries may be familiar to most students, they may not know much more about western food. Bread and potatoes are unlikely to be staples, whereas they may be used to eating rice three times a day.

If your student comes from Asia, they are unlikely to be used to a lot of sweet food, this can change quickly! Students usually enjoy our ice cream and can rapidly develop a sweet tooth.

You should have been informed if there is any food the student cannot eat for personal or health reasons, but it would pay to check out preferences with the student themselves.

Your student may eat with more noise than you are used to eg. Slurping noodles. Perhaps your children will enjoy this cultural difference! Students may be used to eating faster than we do. Consequently, the concept of mealtime as a social time may be unfamiliar, don't be surprised if your student eats quickly then leaves the table.

### ***How can you help?***

Students from a wide range of countries seem to enjoy New Zealand food, so your usual New Zealand cuisine is fine most of the time.

Learn how to cook a simple dish or two from the student's country of origin. Use rice instead of potatoes on a regular basis. Make rice or 2-minute noodles available for breakfast or as an after-school snack. German students usually like a darker and denser rye style bread (which are readily available at bakeries and supermarkets).

Best of all, take your student shopping with you so that you can choose vegetables, school lunch items etc that the student will enjoy. Most supermarkets have a good range of ethnic food and or alternatively you could take your student to the Asian Foods Warehouse in Tauranga, maybe.

Encourage your student to help in the kitchen, ask them what they like to eat and how to cook it. Perhaps your student would like to cook for themselves on a regular basis, especially if your family does not enjoy Asian food. A bottle of chilli and soy sauce on the table can help. Having food in central dishes on the table means your student can help themselves to as much or little as they want.

The concept of helping yourself may need to be explained. Looking after guests by pouring their drinks for them or ensuring they have food to eat is an important custom in Asia. Your student may go hungry while they wait for you to offer food, even after you have told them to help themselves. Show the student which foods they can help themselves to if they are hungry, and which foods to leave for meal preparation. Explain too how to clean up after helping themselves.

Some students will not have cooked at home and may need some instructions to begin with. Cooking with New Zealanders also helps with conversational English, as well as being good fun.

Some Chinese students are lactose intolerant and cannot digest milk or milk products, you'll need to see after the student arrives as they may not be aware of not having been

exposed before. There are very good soymilk products on the market that are a good alternative.

Both Chinese parents and Chinese students may need to be told that Chinese takeaways are not the same as the food they are used to and are best used for the occasional meals rather than a regular diet.

### ***Weight gain:***

If you are concerned about your student, please contact a member of the International Department. We have access to counselors and organisations that can talk to your student about any issues they may have.

### ***School lunches:***

School lunches are provided at WHS. The student will need to advise the International Office or Student Office of their dietary requirements.

Whether the homestay caregiver or the student makes their own, if it is bought from home the cost is included in the board. If the student prefers to buy their lunch, or supplement with 'extras' these should be paid for by the student.

### ***The student's room:***

This is the student's space; they will welcome a place to display photos and other items from home. If possible, allow them to put posters up, and otherwise arrange the room to suit themselves. If they do this with pins, blu-tack or 3m picture hangers, it will minimize damage to walls.

Your student is entitled to privacy. Knock before entering the room and encourage other members of the family to do the same. Unless the student makes it clear that they wish otherwise, make the room off limits to pets. Many Asians seem particularly susceptible to fleas, extra care will need to be taken if your pets stay inside. —

Your student should be responsible for their own room - keeping it clean and tidy. You can offer to vacuum if the floor is kept clear, but some students may prefer to do it themselves. Likewise clean bedding can be made available each week with the student expected to change their bed themselves.

You may need to remind your student not to store or eat food in their room because of ants or worse. Explain how to deal with wet washing. It is not appropriate to use the bedroom or heater for drying, although modesty may mean that your student finds it difficult to display underwear on the line.

Tension can arise between different expectations and definitions of clean and tidy. If you can, just keep the door shut and ignore any mess. If you cannot, it is probably easier to change the homestay than to change either you or the student.

### ***Staying in the room - sanctuary or seclusion?***

Encourage the student to join you in the evenings, e.g. for watching TV, games and conversation. But don't worry if some time is spent in their room on their own. Hopefully homework will be part of the reason. Students may be used to spending several hours doing homework.

If you feel the student is becoming withdrawn and does not spend time outside of their room, this may need to be followed up. A call to a member of the International department to discuss any concerns about your student is welcomed.

If your student can achieve a balance between time on their own and time with the family, this will help with their English and still allow for privacy.

### ***Sleep and other habits:***

Many international students are used to staying up much later than New Zealand teenagers and adults. As a result, they are often very tired the next day, and have difficulty getting out of bed in the mornings.

There does not appear to be an easy way around this, other than ensuring their habits do not disturb the family. Give the student a time after which they may not make or receive phone calls. Ask them to use headphones etc.

It is not your responsibility to get the student up and off to school. If lateness is a problem, the school should follow up on this with the student. There may be disciplinary consequences, which may provide an incentive for improvement. Reminding the student that they're here on a study visa and talking with their mates either on chat lines at home in the middle of the night, or the phone across town isn't helping, may seem logical to our adult brains, but may not wash with a homesick, or just social teenager.

### ***Adjusting to the cold:***

Some students will find New Zealand cold. All students may be used to warmer houses and be surprised at the lack of either central heating or air conditioning. A room heater can be very expensive on electricity particularly if your student isn't very responsible with how they use it. Encourage your student to wear warm clothing. Using a timer on their room heater or fixing the temperature gauge at a suitable level with superglue are some suggestions to help with this. Many students are not used to having to take responsibility for a heater and may need reminding to turn it off before going to bed and leaving the house.

## ***Expectations of New Zealand families:***

### **Chores:**

The information the student has before they arrive would have said something about living in a homestay. They are a member of the family while with you and as such can be expected to help a little. At the very least they will need to pick up after themselves. You may also want them to help with table laying and dishes. Talking over the student's day while doing the dishes in the evening is an excellent way of practicing English and keeping an eye on the student at the same time.

Helping with light family duties is one of the experiences of living in a homestay. If you have children of your own who are expected to help, sharing the chores will lessen any resentment.

Their school workload is also likely to be a lot less than they are used to. Although, Chinese students particularly will work at finding extra academic tasks to fill any spare time.

Most homestay caregivers do the washing for their students. Have a place for students to put their dirty washing, or ensure your student is comfortable with you entering their room to collect their dirty washing basket (and perhaps empty the rubbish bin on a regular basis). Make your expectations clear from the start.

### ***Keeping in touch:***

You will need to explain your family's expectations regarding times to be home, and whether or not you are notified regarding after school etc. Your student may be used to coming and going without notifying their parents. However, we expect students to let you know if they will miss a meal and to tell you when to expect them home, or to check with you first before bringing a friend home for a meal. As a general guide you should expect the same courtesy and respect that you expect from your own children.

As a rule, Whakatane High School would expect students to be at home at least 3-4 evenings a week. Some social activity during the weekend is to be expected. However, in town late at night is dangerous and needs to be closely monitored.

## QUESTIONS FOR HOMESTAY FAMILIES TO GO THROUGH WITH STUDENTS IN THE FIRST FEW DAYS

*Please spend about half an hour every evening in the student's first week going through these questions with them. It'll just help to get to know each other better.*

### DAY ONE

1. What do I call you?
2. When can I telephone my family?
3. When can I use the internet?
4. How do I get to and from school?
5. What happens after school?
6. What family rules and procedures do I need to know about?
7. Where can I keep my toiletries?
8. When is the best time for me to have a shower and use the bathroom, in the morning or in the evening?
9. How long may I stay in the shower?

### DAY TWO

1. What is the procedure about dirty clothes? Where do I keep them until wash days?
2. Should I wash my own underclothes?
3. Where should I dry any clothes, I wash?
4. What time are meals?
5. What would you like me to do at mealtimes? For example
  - Set the table? Clear the table? Wash up or Dry?
  - Which food and drink may I help myself to?
  - Which food and drink must I ask first before having?

### **DAY THREE**

1. What chores am I expected to do daily? For example:

Make my bed, Keep my room tidy?

Leave the bathroom clean and tidy?

2. Which bathroom toiletries can I use (shampoo, toothpaste)?

3. What area of the home are private (For example: parent's bedroom, study, sewing room)?

4. Where can I store my suitcases?

5. What time should I get up on weekday mornings?

6. What time should I get up on weekends and holidays?

7. What time should I go to bed and turn the lights out on weekdays and weekends?

8. Do I have to ask to go out?

9. What dates are the birthdays of my host family?

### **DAY FOUR**

1. What is the address for incoming mail?

2. What are my homestay father's likes and dislikes?

3. What are my homestay mother's likes and dislikes?

4. What are my host brothers and sisters likes and dislikes?

5. How do I get around?

6. Do you expect me to message / phone if I am going to be late home?

### **DAY FIVE**

1. If I have any problems, who would you like me to go to?

2. May I put pictures and posters on walls in my bedroom?

3. May I rearrange my bedroom?

4. When can I have friends to stay overnight?

5. When can I invite friends around during the day? (Not opposite sex, if parents are not there).

6. Is there anything else you would like me to know?



### **Whakatane High School Code of Conduct:**

#### **The student agrees to:**

1. Be polite and friendly to school staff, students, caregivers and homestay families.
2. All Medical health issues (inclusive of mental health) **must** be fully disclosed to Whakatane High School. This includes any previous and present physical and mental health issues for the student in the last 5 years.
3. You are **NOT** allowed to smoke, vape, drink or supply alcohol while enrolled at Whakatane High School, even if you are 18 years old.
4. Do not lend money or take anything from another person without their permission.
5. Never use drugs of any kind, unless prescribed by a medical practitioner. It is illegal in New Zealand to possess or consume a range of natural or synthetic drugs. These drugs are listed as Class A (very high risk: methamphetamine, magic mushrooms, cocaine, heroin and LSD), Class B (high risk: cannabis oil, hashish, morphine, opium, ecstasy and many amphetamine-type substances) and Class C drugs ( moderate risk: cannabis seed, cannabis plant and codeine) in:

<http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/drugs-and-alcohol/illicit-drugs-offences-and-penalties>

**Whakatane High School has a zero tolerance policy on the use of illegal substances.**

6. During the weekend (Friday and Saturday nights) you must ask your homestay family permission to go out. If they agree to where and with whom you are going, you may go out until a time that suits them. Weeknights you may catch up with your friends or go to sports practices after school but please discuss a suitable time to be home with your host parents.
7. Do not swim or surf alone. Life jackets must be worn at all times when you are on a boat and jet skis.
8. Extreme sports, for example but not limited to bungee jumping, skydiving, white water rafting, kite surfing, quad bikes, shooting and hunting etc. must be signed off by the International Director and consent given by your natural parents.
9. If students are going to be staying away from Whakatane overnight (with a supervising adult) they must complete a **WHS trip consent form** and submit this **at least 7 days prior** to the trip for the approval of the International Director.
10. We do not allow mixed sleepovers.

11. Under the NZ Law you will need to be 16 years or over to have a sexual relationship.
12. Students are **not permitted** to travel alone (over night, weekends or holidays) at any age while they attend Whakatane International Programme.
13. It is a legal requirement to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle and to wear a seatbelt when riding in a motor vehicle. Riding a bicycle on the footpath is not permitted. You may incur an instant fine from the police if caught without a helmet. Students are not allowed to hitchhike.
14. Not purchasing, owning or driving a motor vehicle while enrolled at Whakatane High School.
15. Paid employment for after school or during school holidays is only permitted if the student has the relevant variation of conditions from NZ Immigration on their visa.  
The student can not start work in their first term of starting at Whakatane High School, and **must have approval** from the International Director and at the discretion of the Host family, prior to employment being undertaken.
16. Attend school every day and complete all of Whakatane High School's assessments when required to do so.