



## St Augustine's College International Student Program Homestay Guidelines for Students

Homestay is the term used to describe full board accommodation offered by a family, a couple or a single person for which a set weekly fee is charged. This fee covers all the expenses associated with providing food and shelter to an International Student. This includes providing:

- A single room for student use including a bed, a desk with lamp and chair, a wardrobe or place to hang your clothes and appropriate lighting.
- Bed linen (sheets and quilt cover) and towels. The Homestay host will provide clean linen to change the bed, usually every week or every second week.
- Two meals (breakfast and dinner) per day during the week and three meals per day on the weekend.
- Utilities – cost of water, electricity, gas, internet and etc. This includes providing adequate heating and cooling during winter and summer.
- Cleaning of common areas within the home
- Use of living areas within the home

The Homestay experience is an opportunity for you to improve their English as well as learn about the Australian culture, family life and allow you to make the most of your International experience.

All students regardless of age must live in a registered and approved Homestay. The College aims to have no more than 3 students placed with any one Homestay family to ensure the boys are properly cared for. Maintaining a greater level of control over our Homestay increases our care to the highest possible levels and allows us to keep our promise to all parents that we will look after their sons as if they were our own. We rely on our Homestay families to assist us with this duty of care by maintaining regular communication with the College.

We believe that the students' accommodation is as important as their academic studies and our aim is to provide all students with a caring, safe, supportive environment in which to live. This will provide a much more successful study environment for students.

### **To Our Students:**

The purpose of this booklet is to assist you to have a better understanding of the Australian way of life and culture so that you can enjoy yourself and have the best time possible during your stay in our country.

Life in Australia is, in many ways, very different to life in your own country and we understand that you may feel a bit lost, especially if this is your first visit to Australia, or away from home.

Below, are some points that can assist and support you to make sure you have a rewarding



# ST AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE – SYDNEY

A Catholic Congregational school for boys in Years 5 to 12, teaching the Augustinian values of  
'Truth, Love & Community'

## Homestay experience:

- Arrive with a positive attitude
- Be open minded and understand that the people, the food and the way things are done, are all different
- Be flexible
- Allow yourself to try new things
- Be tolerant and respectful! Even of the things you might not agree with
- Talk to your host family, show an interest in them and spend time getting to know them
- When you smile at people they smile back.

If you are positive when you meet your family, your experience can be very rewarding. Families come in all shapes and sizes; we have single parents, mum's and dad's both working and a wonderful mix of different cultures.

Be daring and try all the different types of food you are served. Remember to keep in mind that we are a multicultural country and this is reflected in what we eat. You might have Italian food one day and Thai the next and all of this without going to a restaurant.

- Say "please" when you ask for something
- Say "thank you" if someone gives you something or shows kindness towards you
- Smile and say "good morning" when you see members of your Homestay family in the morning
- Say "goodbye" to everyone at home when you are leaving the house
- Say "goodnight" every night when you retire to your bedroom at night
- Say "hello or "Hi I'm home" every time you enter the house
- If you want to use equipment in the home like the radio, video, sound system or computer, always ask first
- Always offer to help with setting the table, washing-up or any kind of light housework. Your host will appreciate it and it is also a great way of engaging in conversations.
- If you are not sure of how to do something, ASK! Your Homestay family will be happy to help and teach you.
- Always knock before entering a bedroom, and wait until you are invited to enter. Your Homestay family will treat you with the same respect.
- Please eat with your mouth closed and talk only when your mouth is empty of food
- Blow your nose only with a handkerchief or a tissue. It's bad manners to use other forms.
- Australians love their privacy so please respect their space if they are watching TV, reading, or doing other activities by themselves. If you need to talk to them, ask first if it is possible. If not, you should wait until they are free.
- If you have a preferred name, tell your host what you would like to be called.



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## ***On arrival***

When you first arrive, your host will probably take you on a tour of the house. If there are house rules, your host might mention them at this time. It's ok if you need to ask what they are at a later time and if you have questions about the rules, please ask them to explain.

## ***General Expectations***

- Students are expected to make their own bed every morning and keep their room tidy
- Once a week the bedroom will be vacuumed. Some Homestay families may prefer to do this themselves, however many will ask the student to help.
- Privacy in the bedroom will be respected, if anyone wants to come in, they should knock at the door first
- There is absolutely **no eating in the bedroom** as this could attract insects and rodents.
- Smoking is **not allowed in the house**, it is considered dangerous and unhealthy. In most Australian homes smoking is only allowed in a specific outdoor area.
- No wet clothes are to be left in your bedroom. Australian families dry their clothes on an outdoor clothesline or put them in the tumble dryer. You must familiarize yourself with the family rules for drying clothes.
- Generally clothes will be washed once a week. The Homestay family will show you how to use the washing machine, or some families may wash all the clothes together and will tell you what day they are washing. Please do NOT ask for your clothes to be washed every day. You should have enough school uniforms to last the week, only having to wash on the weekend. Please allow plenty of time to for your clothes to dry so they are ready for Monday morning. The College uniform policy will always apply.
- If music or games are played in the bedroom make sure that it's not too loud and other family members are not disturbed.
- Always use the bathroom for short periods of time. Take short showers, 10 minutes maximum. Water is limited in Australia and energy can be quite expensive, so if you have long showers the hot water might run out.
- Make sure the shower door or curtain is closed so water stays in the shower and does not go on the floor.
- The hand basin is only used for washing hands and faces and also for brushing teeth.
- For health reasons and to satisfy personal tastes, the student should buy his own toiletries such as toothbrush, toothpaste, comb/brush, and deodorant.

## ***Internet***

Internet is included as part of Homestay accommodation. Homestay families may place restrictions on when students can/can't use the internet, this is to ensure students are not up playing games all night and receive a good amount of sleep. Students need to be aware what they can use the internet for, i.e. browsing, emailing and chatting.



## **House Security**

- Make sure you look after your keys and never write the Homestay address in the key ring tag (just in case these are lost)
- Always make sure to lock the house if you are the last one to leave
- Also make sure you close and lock any windows you might have opened previously

Accidents do happen around the house, so do not get scared. If something is damaged or broken around your Homestay, make sure the host is informed straight away. If the student caused the damage, they should offer to pay for the repairs/replacement.

## **Banking/Money**

- Students should not carry large amounts of money with them at anytime
- An Australian bank account should be opened as soon as possible, and the host family (or guardian if U/18yrs) may need to assist with this process.
- Withdraw a weekly amount from the bank for your expenses like: transport, lunches, movies, etc. Keep the rest secure in the bank account

## **Food/M Meal Times**

- The students are to be provided with breakfast and dinner 7 days a week and lunch only on the weekends
- Students may have to prepare their own breakfast in the mornings as many Homestay families have to rush off to work. They are expected to leave everything clean and tidy in the kitchen afterwards
- Dinner will be cooked every evening. If the student is not going to be home for dinner, they **MUST** phone the host family (before 5pm) to let them know so they do not wait for you.
- If a student will be home late, however still wishes to have dinner, they should also let the host family know before 5pm. The student will be expected to heat up and serve his own meal and clean up at the end if they are late for dinner
- If the host family will be out in the evening, they will leave a meal already prepared for the student with instructions for heating, etc.
- The student should offer assistance to set-up the table or to clean up after the evening meal.
- If the student likes to drink soft drinks like Coke or Sprite, they should buy their own. Many Australians buy these kind of drinks as special treats and for special occasions

## **Transport**

The host family is responsible for showing the student how to get to the College, either before their first day, or on the first day of school. This might be done by driving or going on public transport with the student. It is the student's responsibility to understand where to catch public transport and where to ask if they don't understand. All students are responsible to pay for their own transportation.



## **Curfew**

Students are expected to tell the host parent where they are going and what time they will be home. Please make sure you have the host's mobile number and also the host has your mobile number so that both parties can be contacted at any time. You need to understand that you are living with another family.

- If the student is under 16, they must be home by 7.30pm Sunday to Thursday, and by 10pm on Friday and Saturday nights.
- If the student is over 16, they must be home by 9pm Sunday to Thursday, and by 10.30pm Friday and Saturday nights.
- If the student is over 18, they must be home by 11pm Sunday to Thursday, and by 12.30am Friday and Saturday nights. Any later time should be negotiated with the Homestay host.
- **Staying overnight at any other accommodation is not allowed unless approved in advance by the student's guardian and the College.** The guardian as well as the Homestay family must have the name and contact number of where the student will be and who they will be staying with.
- Students must ask permission before bringing friends into the family home
- Students under 18yrs must not enter premises where alcohol is sold. This includes bars, nightclubs and casinos.
- Students must maintain a minimum of 80% attendance at College and make good progress in their studies. If they do not do this, the College must report them to Immigration and their visa could be cancelled.
- If students refuse to follow these rules, the host family is obliged to tell the Guardian and the College. Breaking these rules may put the student in breach of their visa and they can be expelled.
- Please be quiet in the house after 10pm. There may be other people who are sleeping and need to work the following day. Keep noise to a minimum.

## **Child Protection and Welfare**

St Augustine's College, Sydney is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment of all students and staff. The commitment to create a 'safe and supportive environment' relates not only to *Child Protection* but overlaps with *Pastoral Care, Student Management, Drug and Alcohol, Work, Health and Safety, Risk Management, Privacy and Confidentiality, Critical Incidents, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying* policy development and implementation in the College as well as the NSW Institute of Teachers Professional Standards.

## **Insurance**

The students must have Overseas Health Cover for the period of their stay in Australia. The College organises many of the boy's insurance cover, however, it is your responsibility to ensure it is valid. You are to carry your health card with you at all times. If you have any questions about your health cover, you will need to speak to the College Registrar.



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## **Homestay Fees and Payment**

Students must arrange to pay their Homestay fees fortnightly or monthly directly to their Homestay family. They can arrange a direct debit from a bank account and may need assistance from their Homestay host to set up.

The College suggested homestay fee is \$280/week and it is likely to be reviewed in 2018.

Students must speak to the International Office at the College **prior** to changing Homestay. If a change of Homestay family has been approved by the College, the student must then give 2 weeks' notice to the host family. Please note on those occasions where the student chooses to leave without giving 2 weeks' notice, 2 weeks fees will still apply unless otherwise agreed.

During holidays, when the student goes home, half the weekly Homestay fee will be charged if the student wishes for the room to be held so they can return to the same Homestay.

## **Emergency Contact**

In the event of an emergency, please contact the relevant emergency department, and then contact Miss Vivian. Vivian can then contact the students' parents on behalf of the homestay/student.

## **Contact Details:**

International Student Program:

Ms Vivian Cao: 9938 8257 / 0448 217 851

Email: [vcao@saintaug.nsw.edu.au](mailto:vcao@saintaug.nsw.edu.au)

Ms Kate Miao: 9938 8237

Email: [miao.k@saintaug.nsw.edu.au](mailto:miao.k@saintaug.nsw.edu.au)

Finally, we recognise that Homestay will never replace the comfort of your own home, however, our aim is to make the Homestay experience as good and comfortable as it can be to encourage an excellent study environment in a healthy and happy cross-cultural atmosphere.

Through the many years we have been working with international students, we have observed that those who are positive, open minded, flexible and tolerant are the ones that have the most rewarding and memorable "Aussie Experience".

