

Accommodation & Welfare Policy

All students studying at Westbourne Grammar School (unless living with a Department of Immigration (DIAC) approved adult relative) must live with a local homestay family organised by the School and supervised by the International Student Coordinator. No students are permitted to live in a flat or house with other students or by themselves. Students must live in an area close to one of Westbourne Grammar School's bus routes. The School must be notified of any change in address and all accommodation and welfare arrangements must be approved by the School. If a student changes their accommodation or welfare arrangements without school approval DIAC will be informed that the school no longer approves the accommodation and welfare of the student and this may affect the student's visa.

1. The homestays provided by the School are appointed by the following process:

- a. The School advertises within the School community and the local community for families interested in offering homestay.
- b. The interested family telephones the School and an Application Form and accompanying information is sent to them. If still interested the family completes the Application Form and returns it to the School.
- c. After reviewing the applications the International Student Coordinator visits the family to outline the School's expectations and the procedures they would need to follow. She checks the quality of the accommodation being offered, takes photographs and fills in an information sheet for future reference.

The homestay family should:

- be Australian residents
- provide a stable family environment
- be suitable for the age and gender of the student particularly for students under the age of 18.
- have English as the main language spoken in the family
- be able to provide age appropriate supervision for the student

Requirements for student accommodation:

- a safe and secure environment
- student to have own room
- accommodation to be clean and comfortable
- adequate heating and cooling
- access to kitchen and laundry facilities
- adequate bathroom facilities
- adequate living areas
- provision of meals
- access to public transport
- awareness of cultural differences

She also gives them a copy of the School's Homestay Booklet which outlines the rules and guidelines for daily living that the homestay families are expected to follow.

- d. All adults 18 years and over living in the homestay will need to apply for a Working With Children (WWC) Check. A copy of each WWC Check Card or Assessment Notice is kept on file. The WWC Check is recognised nationally.
- e. Prior to the student arriving in Australia the International Student Coordinator will forward a homestay profile form to the agent, to be completed by the student and their parents, requesting further information about the student's homestay needs.
- f. Based on information provided on the homestay profile the International Student Coordinator will suggest an appropriate family and supply details to the student and their family via the agent.
- g. Once a student is placed with the homestay family the International Student Coordinator acts as the contact person and is available after hours via mobile telephone.

2. Homestay provided by relatives

Families may wish to nominate relatives or friends in Australia to provide accommodation for the student. If the nominated relatives or friends are not eligible for DIAC approved guardianship, the relatives or friends must apply through the homestay program and be approved by the School.

The School requires that:

- a. The relative / friend must be over 25 years of age and preferably living in a family situation. Relatives aged between 21 and 24 may apply to the Director of Admissions & Marketing for consideration.
- b. The relative / friend must follow the process for applying for homestay as detailed in point 1 of this policy including completing the application form and providing WWC cards or Assessment Notices for all members of the household aged 18 and over. The International Student Coordinator will visit the relative / friend's home to ensure that the accommodation is appropriate. The home must be within the area covered by Westbourne's school bus routes. She will also talk to the relative / friend about the expectation of the School in relation to the accommodation and welfare given to the student. They will receive a copy of the Homestay Booklet containing the rules and guidelines for daily living.
- c. The International Student Coordinator will act as the contact person for the relative / friend.

DIAC approved relatives providing accommodation do not have to apply through the homestay program.

3. Monitoring of homestay families

The International Student Coordinator is available on a daily basis and after hours to students, guardians, homestays and parents. With feedback from families, agents, students and parents she is able to monitor the ongoing quality of the homestay services provided. If any party indicates to the International Student Coordinator that there may be concerns she will follow up immediately by contacting the homestay to resolve the concerns. She continues to monitor the situation closely and where necessary arranges a change of homestay for the student.

If the International Student Coordinator feels that a homestay no longer meets the School's expectations and rules the homestay would not receive any further students.

The International Student Coordinator is in regular contact with homestay families. Annual homestay meetings provide homestays with information on the School's expectations with regard to the rules and guidelines.

4. Students under 13 years of age

Students under 13 years of age are only accepted if they live with a parent or DIAC approved relative. For each student under 13 years of age the School will keep on file either:

- evidence from a passport that a parent of the student is in Australia on a guardianship visa, or
- evidence from a passport that the student is a child of a full fee paying overseas student, or
- a letter from the parent(s) of the student addressed to the Principal of the School in which approval is given for the child to live with other DIAC approved family members in Australia.

Students under the age of 13 cannot be placed in homestay accommodation.

5. Travel for under 18 students

Students whose Accommodation and Welfare has been approved by the school (by the issuance of a CAAW) are required to maintain appropriate Accommodation and Welfare arrangements during school holidays. Students must not travel either within Victoria or interstate unless their arrangements have been approved by the school. Students may travel with their homestay families or with DIAC approved relatives. If this is the case students must obtain permission from their parents in writing and provide the school with contact phone numbers, the address of their intended accommodation during their trip, an itinerary and copy of flight tickets or other travel documents. Students must apply to the International Student Coordinator for permission to travel a minimum of 28 days prior to their planned travel. Approval will be at the discretion of the International Student Coordinator once all the details provided have been considered.

Westbourne Grammar School will not allow students to travel interstate or within Victoria unaccompanied. Should the student fail to obtain school approval for their welfare arrangements while travelling the school may inform DIAC that the school no longer approves of the accommodation and welfare arrangements of the student.