



**TUAKAU COLLEGE**

**Pai rawa atu i nga mea katoa . The very best in all things**

# International Student Residential Caregivers Homestay Guide

Tuakau College, Homestay Families  
And Students in Partnership

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Tuakau College Homestay Programme!

Thank you for supporting our International Fee-Paying Student (IFPS) programme. We appreciate you taking the time to look after a short stay student. They are visiting our College as part of their international experience programme.

The goals of our Homestay Programme are:

- To enable students from other countries to experience the “Kiwi Lifestyle”.
- To provide a caring home environment that is supportive of the students learning needs.
- To promote cross-cultural understanding.

As cultures are often very different and sometimes confusion can occur, we hope this booklet will provide some insight and support in your Homestay role.

It is important to bear in mind that you are hosting a young adult. Young adults need boundaries and at times, guidance. As a host family **you are not** expected to accept standards of behavior and attitudes that you would not accept from your own children. Please make sure your student understands your house rules.

## **Our Obligations**

Tuakau College follows the Ministry of Education Code of Practice regulations for the Pastoral Care of International Students in order to provide a safe, caring, high quality environment for its International Students. You can view the code at [Education \(Pastoral Care of International Students\) Code of Practice 2016](#)

## **Our Expectations**

### **Welcome and Patience**

A warm and friendly welcome to your student. Students arriving in New Zealand have generally heard of our reputation as hospitable people and are usually very excited and often nervous, when they meet you for the first time. They are usually extremely tired and stressed when they first arrive, and will appreciate your patience in the all-important settling in period.

Having daily conversations with the student about their day and discussing solutions to any problems that may arise will ease their anxiety.

## **Family Things**

Inclusion in family activities, e.g. shopping, visiting members of your extended family etc. will make them feel part of the family but also eases their anxiety about the new experiences.

It is important to **establish a clear set of guidelines and boundaries** early in your relationship in order to avoid misunderstandings. Please make clear to your student your family routine, including bed times, meal times and family activities. Written instructions/guidelines are often easier for the student to understand. Provide a sympathetic ear or just a hug if needed as our students are a long way from home and can be lonely or homesick at times.

If you can have someone accompany the student to school on the first day. We will provide mentors for the students and they will ensure that the school routines are met. Ensure that the students understands how they are to travel home. Your own children may like to take some responsibility for this as well. We encourage the students to become as independent as possible.

## **The Settling Process**

We try to match your family with a student that would suit. We send you information about the student, with confirmation of their arrival date in New Zealand. We will contact you via email & phone if the arrival time/date changes.

## **New Culture**

Culture shock – is an anthropological term used to describe the natural anxiety one experiences when entering a new culture. The signs are:

- Tiredness
- Unhappiness
- Feelings of helplessness
- Withdrawal- desire for constant privacy
- Crying

Being in a strange country with little understanding of the culture or language can be very stressful. Your student will be attending classes that will be only taught in English and this will be very tiring for them at the start.

Some students use all their energy at school and require quiet time in their rooms, please respect this and encourage other members of the family to do this also. However, please monitor the time your student does spend alone.

When the student first arrives everything is new and exciting but this response (the honeymoon period) does wear off and can give way to feeling of loneliness or despair (homesickness).

It is normal to be homesick, watch for the signs and help your student to overcome this by talking to them, hugs (if you are comfortable with this) smiling and just showing them that you care. Culture shock can be averted. If you are at all concerned please contact the International Student Manager.

## **Language**

Most students will have their own dictionary, these are usually electronic and are a great help. Especially if the student's English is poor, or they lack confidence in their speaking abilities.

Remember to speak slowly (not loudly), in short simple sentences. Try rephrasing your sentences if the student does not understand what has been said. Sometimes writing down your sentence is a good way to communicate until your student's confidence improves.

Discuss with your student what they should call you. Please be aware that Asian students refer to their elders by their title rather than their first name, so your student may be reluctant to call you by your first name in the beginning.

Be aware of ambiguities- especially yes as it may only mean I understand not that I agree. Use English labels for common household items e.g. washing machine. Using visuals and symbols can reduce introducing too much language initially.

## **Meals and Eating**

Meals in New Zealand tend to be rich and heavy for International visitors and the overall taste of our food is sweeter and richer. Many students also find New Zealand food very dry, being used to sauces and soups with each meal.

Asian students tend to prefer light and salty foods instead of sweets. Also popular are fresh fruit and vegetables, especially for Japanese students.

Most students are keen to at least try our food, however, many students miss rice in their diet. You may like to make a special point of making a rice meal once a week or giving your student the option to cook for you. To accommodate this have a Rice Cooker and rice accessible, thereby, encouraging a 'do it yourself' philosophy.

Check with your student what foods they like and dislike – remember at first they may not know New Zealand foods or their English names, e.g. Marmite.

In many countries making a noise when eating is an acceptable way of showing appreciation for the meal. You may like to explain about cultural differences as you demonstrate New Zealand table manners and practices – all part of living in a different culture!

Provide breakfast, lunch and dinner, plus access to snacks. Follow the rules in your family if your children make their own lunch then show the student the routine to do this and discuss what foods are suitable for a packed lunch. Show your student where the breakfast food and equipment are kept and encourage them to make their own breakfast.

If your student wishes to buy their lunch at school then **they must pay for this themselves.**

## **Bathroom, Toilet and Laundry**

Please be aware that your student may have different washing/cleansing practices to you and your family. As with other areas of life, being aware of these differences and talking about suitable compromises can avoid any problems occurring.

### **Bathing**

It is the practice of some Asian cultures for individuals to wash their bodies before bathing in a bath full of very hot water. This daily bath routine is both time consuming and expensive in New Zealand. Therefore, 'the Kiwi way' to wash is in the shower for 10 minutes. Make sure they **are aware that they need to stay in the shower** and leave the water running.

### **Toileting**

If your student is female please provide a covered bin by the toilet for the disposal of sanitary items. Make sure the girls are aware of how to dispose of these to ensure they are not flushed down the toilet. A general visual note in the toilet works very effectively and avoids embarrassment. We tell all girl students that the New Zealand system is for sanitary items to be wrapped in tissue/bag and placed in the family rubbish bin or bathroom container. Please show the student where the rubbish is to be placed.

### **Laundry**

Make sure they know where to put their dirty washing.

Girls can sometimes be embarrassed about giving you their underwear to wash – they do not like to hang it in the public eye. Please be aware of this – if your student is not giving you their underwear, please ask!

Some Homestays provide their students with a basin (in the laundry) to do their own washing and arrange a place where the students can hang it to dry themselves.

### **Bedroom**

During the winter months you will need to provide additional heating for your Student, you may like to provide them with a heater for their bedroom and an electric blanket, however, please be aware of the following:-

- Asian students prefer to keep their rooms at higher temperatures than New Zealanders feel comfortable with.
- There is a tendency to put heating on rather than additional clothing.
- If you have an electric blanket on the student's bed, please check that they understand how to use it. There have been instances where electric blankets have been left on all day and night!

To overcome these differences and avoid 'problems' arising, please set some clear guidelines for heating. You may like to write them down with your student so you both have something to refer to if an issue occurs.

Some Asian students make up a bed differently. Discuss how your student is accustomed to sleeping before making up the bed initially.

Many people from Asian countries do not go to bed until late at night or early in the morning. This may cause problems with tiredness and falling asleep in class. Please discuss with the students reasonable times for going to bed and what time they should be up in the morning.

### **Additional Information**

- A responsible adult must be in the house with the student.
- At Tuakau College we prefer to place one student of any one nationality with a Homestay family. We do not place male and female students, even of different nationalities, together.
- Hours - Students are expected to be at home at reasonable times – they are not allowed to stay out overnight without prior notification to Homestay Family and the International Manager of all relevant details. They should not be left overnight without a responsible adult being present.
- Damages - If the student breaks or damages something in your home while staying with you, these things should be covered by your own insurances. The student should have his/her own medical insurance and insurance for their personal belongings.
- Phone Calls - The student should be encouraged **not to** make international calls from your telephone unless they use a pre-paid card such as a Talk-Talk Card. They must tell you first and as long as you are aware of the charges.
- Internet - Same rules apply to your kids. They should have **limited access ONLY**. They will have access at school but be aware of what they are doing in their bedrooms late. Some students will spend hours on the internet into the night and early hours. Make it clear what your expectations are in using the internet and WiFi.
- Transport to school - The Host family is responsible for getting the student to school on time. The student may walk, if the homestay is close to the school. Please ensure that the student is confident of the route before they walk to school. Transport may also be by car or by bus. If by bus, please help the student to learn which bus to catch, and where to get on and off.

- Confidentiality - We treat information about your family as confidential. We ask you to have the same consideration for other families on our Homestay Register. Please do not give Tuakau College staff phone numbers or other information shown in this booklet to other people without prior permission from the person concerned.
- Please Advise A.S.A.P - Any change of members of the family, e.g. new baby, teenager going flatting, Grandma staying, other visitors staying, e.g. long term boarder, exchange student. Absence of any family member, e.g. father overseas. Change of address or phone number. House on the market – land agents bringing visitors through the house. New pets acquired.

### **Illness and/or Emergency**

Absence from School – The school absentee line is 09 2368521 option 2. Please call this line if the student is going to be absent from school or let the International Student Manager know. The student will have medical insurance if they have to go to the Doctors or an emergency health situation occurs.

Usually our Homestay families are able to help with most personal problems, e.g. culture shock or minor illnesses, but if anything major happens, e.g. car accident, please immediately contact our International Student Manager or another 24/7 contact person listed. A decision/action plan will be decided in best interests of student and his/her family.

### **Contacts**

#### **24 hour help in emergency:**

Roxane Miller Tel: 021 937 846

Chris Betty Tel: 0274 520 538

#### **Homestay/School issues: Roxane Miller**

Work: 09 236 8521 Extn: 141

Mobile: 02102 485 997

Email: [international@tuakaucollege.com](mailto:international@tuakaucollege.com)

#### **International Student Manager: Roxane Miller**

Work: 09 236 8521 Extn: 141

Mobile: 02102 485 997

#### **Director of International: Chris Betty**

Work: 092368521 Extn: 109

After hours: 09 233 4525

Mobile: 0274 520 538

Email: [principal@tuakaucollege.com](mailto:principal@tuakaucollege.com)