



KiwiCare

Homestay Handbook



Guidelines and procedures to ensure a rewarding hosting experience

Contents

1. Cover Page
2. Contents
3. Contact Details
4. Welcome
5. The Essence of Homestay
6. The Homestay Relationship
7. Basic Requirements
8. Basic Requirements continued
9. Basic Requirements continued
10. Arrival in Auckland
11. Orientation
12. Classes
13. Medical
14. Avoiding cultural misunderstandings
15. Hosting young students
16. Guardians
17. Guardians continued
18. Money Matters
19. Tour Groups
20. Communication/Feedback
21. Additional Services
22. Emergencies

Contact Details

Address :

Kiwi English Academy Ltd / KiwiCare Guardianship Services Ltd.
Ground Floor, 27 Davis Cres, Newmarket

Postal Address :

P.O.Box 113-042, Newmarket

Contacts :

www.kiwienglish.co.nz
motoko@kiwienglish.co.nz
School phone: 09 5244711
Emergency phone: 021 605 656



Welcome

Welcome to the KiwiCare Homestay department. Homestay is all about providing a friendly and caring home for students from overseas, a home away from home.

When a student chooses to stay with a family they choose this for the home comforts, the opportunity to practise English with native speaker, to learn about our culture and to be a part of a Kiwi family.

In our experience, the key to success is having a genuine interest in the students.

Our goal is to ensure each of our students is happy and has a fantastic living and learning experience while in New Zealand.

If you have any worries or concerns about your student we are always available to discuss these with you, whether by phone or email. We have a number of counsellors at Kiwi who may speak your student's first language.

The Essence of Homestay

Hosting an overseas student can be a very rewarding experience for you and your family. Homestay is more than just a room in a house. Homestay hosts open their family home to welcome another member in to their family by providing a warm, caring home for the student. It's a great opportunity for families to meet people from around the world.

Our students come from Russia, Europe, the Middle East, Japan, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, China, Korea, South America, etc. and range in ages from 11 or 12 through to 60 plus!

Our younger students' (aged 11-17) needs will be different and we provide additional guidelines for hosting these students.

Your role as a homestay family is a significant factor in the students' overall experience in NZ.

For many students this may be their first time away from home and along with major cultural differences the student may feel quite overwhelmed and / or homesick. Providing a comfortable and friendly home goes a long way to helping the student overcome these feelings.

The Homestay Relationship

The idea of Homestay is for the student to be treated as a member of the family. As such you can ask your student to do certain things like keeping their bedroom tidy, clearing the table after meals, helping to set the table, etc.

Please note some students may have come from homes where they have servants/maids so please keep this in mind when allocating duties. Not all cultures have the same expectations of young people as we do in NZ.

All students respond well to their homestays showing an interest in them, their country, and culture. Even if they do not always join you on outings they appreciate being asked.

Just as you would encourage your son or daughter to spend some time interacting with the family it is important for your student to do the same. A student who spends hours in his/her room is not practising their English or developing their communication skills. Ask them to watch TV with you, read the paper, show you their homework, etc.



Basic Requirements

The majority of students book a single room but on occasion students do prefer to share a room. We will discuss this in advance of the student's arrival.

Many of our students are not used to cold climates so please ensure sufficient bedding is provided and a heater for the cooler months.

The student's bedroom:

Your student should be provided with a bed, study desk, chair, study lamp, wardrobe and chest of drawers. Please make sure there is adequate lighting. Towels and bed linen are to be provided. The student should be given a key for access to the house and any alarm passwords provided.

Meals

Mealtimes are a good time to converse with your student and for them to practise their English. Spending time each day in conversation with your student is a valuable way of helping them improve their English and also creating a close bond with them.

Make sure your student knows what time meals are served and if they are not going to be home to let you know well in advance.

Half Board

Homestay families are to provide breakfast and dinner Monday to Friday and breakfast, lunch and dinner at weekends and on Public Holidays. We expect our homestay families to eat meals with the student.



Full Board

If you have a younger student attending one of the local schools you may have been asked to provide full board. Please provide breakfast, lunch and dinner Monday to Sunday. High school students can be encouraged to make their own school lunches with your initial help and guidance.

Special dietary needs

You are not expected to provide any special diets unless previously agreed but it's important to find out from your student if they have any particular food likes or dislikes within reason.

Bathroom

Your student should have free access to the bathroom in the same way as the family and should be able to have a daily shower. Students playing sport may need more than one shower per day.

It is a good idea to explain about our hot water cylinders and the use of the water. We advise them to keep their showers short (5-10 minutes maximum).

Cleaning

Some students may not be accustomed to tidying their own clothes or making their own beds. You may have to explain that they must now do these jobs for themselves and show them how to do it.

Toiletries

Students have been asked to provide their own soap, toothpaste, shampoo and personal toiletries.

Heating

Most students from colder climates come from homes with central heating. We inform students that heaters are not to be left on overnight, or when they are not in their room.

Students must have a heater in their bedroom in winter.

The Laundry

The student's bed linen and towels should be washed and changed once a week. Older students may prefer to do their own washing. If you are going to do the student's laundry then it is helpful if you give your students a laundry bag, which you can collect from their room.

Drying and ironing facilities should be explained and made available to the student.

Some students may feel embarrassed and want to wash their underwear. If so please show them where to do it and where to dry it.

Internet

Access to the internet is important for most students. Students all have smart phones, their own calling/data plan. Students also have wireless internet access at school.

Students are advised there is to be NO DOWNLOADING of any kind. If your student is staying up very late surfing the web/ playing games, please talk to us so we can find a solution. This kind of activity adversely affects their performance at school.

Arrival in Auckland



For many students this may be their first time away from home. Their backgrounds will vary and they will have very different ideas about family life.

The host family and student relationship is the key to a successful experience.

One of the most important things to remember is that communication is key. If you don't think that your student understands what you say try writing it down or use google translate. Speak slowly and clearly.

Make sure on the first day the student has your contact details and please ask them for theirs.

Show the student your local area and community facilities (shopping centers, libraries, etc.)

Show the student where to catch the bus / train and where possible bring them to school on their first day or do a practice run the day before.

Orientation

First Day at School. Your student should arrive at reception on their first day

27 Davis Cres (Ground Floor) at 8:45am

They need to bring their passport and insurance details.

Most families travel with their students on their first day of school but if prior commitments make this impossible, you can show your student the bus /train route on the weekend. It is helpful if you write down the bus number for the student so our counsellors can print them a timetable if needed at school.

One of our staff will be waiting to greet the new students on their arrival at school.

On the first morning the students have a few tests (taking around 1 hour) to find out their level, followed by orientation with one of our counsellors who will often speak the student's first language.

The orientation programme is on Schoology, our Learning Management System. The staff cover a range of topics carefully with students on Monday morning including homestay information.

Students are also given an introduction to the staff, shown around the school and start classes after the morning break at 11:20am.

Classes

Junior students (aged 11-17) attend school from 9am to 3pm, with a morning tea break from 11-11:20am and a lunch break from 1:20-2pm.

Senior students (aged 18 plus) normally attend school for 20 hours per week daily from 9 am to 1:20pm Monday to Friday, with a morning tea break from 11-11:20 am.

If your student seems unhappy with their class, he/she should talk to their counselor, then their teacher and if need be to the principal.

Students have block tests once every 6 weeks and may move levels after these if they have reached the required level.

On the final Friday of each 6-week block, junior students will finish school at 1:20pm. For more details and dates, please see the Academic Calendar on the Kiwi English website. (www.kiwienglish.co.nz)

Medical

Under the Code of Practice all international students are required to hold appropriate medical and travel insurance at all times.

If they are ill, outside school hours, please take them to see a doctor, ask them to bring their receipt to our admin staff who will help them to claim a refund.



Avoiding cultural misunderstandings

Differences in culture can easily give rise to misunderstandings for homestay families as well as their students. We expect everyone to use 'please' and 'thank you' as we do but these simple words are not the norm in every culture.

Please have patience with your student and explain how things are done in your home, and/or New Zealand.

If the student's English is very limited and they do not appear to understand you please call us and one of our native language counsellors can discuss any issues with the student.

We have a number of information sheets available that relate to certain nationalities and hosting. Currently we have information for French, Korean, Saudi Arabian, Japanese, Russian, Thai and young students. If you would like a copy of any/all of these please call our homestay department.



Hosting Young Students (aged 11-17)

Some young students come here with only basic English. If you speak slowly and clearly it will help your student a lot. It is good to talk to them while they are helping with family chores or perhaps watching TV together. Don't give up even if you are experiencing difficulties. If you need one of our native language counsellors to help you communicate with your student please call us on 524-4711.

Very young students (aged 11-13) need to communicate with their families regularly. This level of communication particularly for those students under 14 is a requirement of the Code of Practice.

Washing

Homestay parents should do the washing for their student (this saves a lot of water going everywhere), but please make sure your student knows where to put their dirty washing, how often washing is done, etc. The student can be shown how and where to hang and bring in their own washing.

Supervision

Homestay families are responsible for their young student (especially those under 14) after school and in the weekends. You need to know where they are and who they are with at all times. They cannot be left alone in the house if they are under 14.

Homesickness

Do not be too alarmed or take it as a reflection on yourselves if your student seems to be a bit tearful during the first few days. The younger students in particular, do get very homesick. This usually passes, but if you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school on 524-4711.

Homework

Asking your student about their homework and helping them when needed is a good time to forge a bond with the student. It will really help to 'break the ice' and give your student a focus for talking with you.

Curfew Times

Students under 15 years need to be home by 6pm Sunday through Thursday and Friday and Saturday evenings under supervision.

Students 15-16 years need to be home by 6pm Sunday through Thursday and by 10pm on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Students 17-18 years need to be home by 6pm Sunday through Thursday, by 11pm Friday and 12am Saturday.

Money Matters

All payments are arranged through the school.

Host families are paid fortnightly by direct credit to the homestay family's designated bank account.

The payment is made on a Friday and depending on when your student arrives you are paid for either 1 week or two. Payments are always in arrears.

Please do not discuss payment with your student and do not accept money from your student for homestay fees.

If you accept homestay payments directly from your student you are in breach of the contract you have with KiwiCare.

Extension of Homestay

If your student wishes to extend his/her homestay please let us know. We can then organize payment from the student or agent for the additional homestay fees.

If a student wishes to leave the homestay earlier than planned we ask for 1 week's notice unless the student is part of a group when only three days' notice is required.



Tour Groups

The feedback that we receive from families is that the tour groups are fun to host. Having two students together means they are good company for one another and can help each other to communicate.

Our groups are also kept very busy with a full, fun itinerary.

Tour groups are usually placed in pairs and are happy to share a room.

Some groups request three meals a day and others two. You will be notified of the groups preference before their arrival.

Unlike single placement students tour group students require collecting from Kiwi English on arrival and dropping back to Kiwi English when they depart. There are often weekend drop offs and pick up as well as groups usually have weekend activities.

If for some reason we need to move tour group students to another homestay we only have to give host families three days notice.

Communication / Feedback

As we have said already communication is key to the success of a student experience.

At Kiwi English we use regular feedback processes to ensure students are happy in their homestay :

- A) quarterly surveys for all students under 18 living in homestay
- B) Six weekly surveys for all students asking students to rate their homestay 1-5 (5 being the best)
- C) Exit surveys for all students asking students the following questions :

- Were you treated like a family member ?
- Was your homestay comfortable ?
- Did you have sufficient opportunity to speak English?

It is also important for us to know our homestay hosts are happy with their hosting experience.

There are clear processes for you to communicate your thoughts to us :

- A) Homestay training evenings
- B) Homestay family survey
- C) Phone / Email

To keep you up to date with events at Kiwi English we also send out newsletters to our homestay hosts 3 times per year.

Additional Services

A) Academic counseling

All long term students (ie: 12 weeks or longer) at KEA have access to regular academic counselling.

Students are encouraged to revisit their goals and discuss their progress. If they plan to go on to further study at secondary/tertiary level this is also discussed. We have a lot of up-to-date information at school to share with the students regarding their options.

B) **ActionKiwi:** Activities

Booking for activities can be made through the admin staff. We encourage students to get out and about in the week-ends.

Emergencies

In case of an accident or illness, please deal with the situation where possible and inform Kiwi English Academy immediately or if your student is at High School please inform their school and/or their guardian.

Kiwi English Academy 09 524-4711
(for all enquiries)

Welfare Manager Motoko: 09 524-4711

After hours emergency 021 605656

