



# KiwiCare

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## Homestay Handbook



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# Guidelines and procedures to ensure a rewarding hosting experience

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## Contact Details

### Address :

Kiwi English Academy Ltd / KiwiCare Guardianship Services Ltd.  
2nd Floor, 27 Davis Cres, Newmarket

### Postal Address :

P.O.Box 113-042, Newmarket

### Contacts :

[www.kiwienglish.co.nz](http://www.kiwienglish.co.nz)  
[homestay@kiwienglish.co.nz](mailto:homestay@kiwienglish.co.nz)  
School phone: 09) 5244711  
Emergency phone: 021 605 656



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## Welcome

Welcome to 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 practice English with Kiwis, 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.

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

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.

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## 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.



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## 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 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 own 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. If you have long term students we suggest they purchase their own monthly plan. If you are happy for your student to use the internet, we suggest you discuss it with them in advance to avoid any misunderstandings about when and how often they can use it, plus any charge you may wish to make. We would not expect the monthly charge for internet to exceed \$40 for the student. Students will have been advised there is to be NO DOWNLOADING of any kind.

Students have wireless internet access at school and there are a number of internet cafes locally.

# 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 is understanding try writing it down or using goggle 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.

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## Orientation

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

### **27 Davis Cres (Level 2, Top Floor) at 8.15am**

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 number of tests (taking around 1.5-2 hours) to find out their level, followed by orientation with one of our counsellors who will usually speak the student's first language.

The students are supplied with an information pack containing maps of the Newmarket area, bus and train timetables and given a handbook including Kiwi English regulations and expectations. We also talk to them about homestay. They are given guidelines with regards to time in shower, internet usage, etc. Our staff will help them to organise bus cards and SIM cards as required.

Students are also given an introduction to the staff, shown around the school and start classes in the afternoon if they are a full-time student. The entire orientation procedure generally takes around 3 - 3.5 hours.

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## Classes

Junior students (aged 11-17) attend school from 8.30am to 3pm, with a morning tea break from 10.30-11am and a lunch break from 1-2pm.

Senior students (aged 18 plus) who attend school full time (25 hours) attend daily from 8.30am Monday to Thursday and finish on a Friday at 1pm with a morning tea break from 10.30am-11am and a lunch break from 1-1.45pm. There are no afternoon classes on Friday afternoons for senior students.

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 1pm. For more details and dates, please see the Academic Calendar on the Kiwi English website. ([www.kiwienglish.co.nz](http://www.kiwienglish.co.nz))

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# Medical

Under the Code of Practice all international students are required to hold appropriate medical, 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.



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## 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.



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## 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, preferably calling them once a week and emailing more often. They can buy an international calling card to make their overseas calls or use Skype/Whatsapp etc on their laptop or their smart phones. 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.

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# Guardians

Students aged between 11—17 studying at Kiwi for longer than 4 weeks will generally have a guardian who will be responsible for providing additional support to the student and yourself if and when needed.

**Permission to stay over needs to be in writing to us with the address and contact details of where they are staying.**

Many of our young students have one of the admin staff as their guardian. Some have external guardians. It is important you have the guardian's contact details.

## Behaviour

You should have the same behavioral expectations of international students as you have of local children the same age.

## Transport

Homestay families should show their young student how to get to and from school. They may need company for the first couple of days.

## Travel

Students under the age of 18 are not permitted to travel independently. They must be with a responsible adult and/or on an organized approved tour.





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## **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.

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# 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 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.



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## Additional Services

### A) **KiwiEdlink:** Academic counseling

All long term students (ie: 12 weeks or longer) at KEA have access to academic counselling once every 6 weeks.

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

Every month we produce an activities calendar setting out options for day trips and/or overnight trips. Students can book through the admin staff. Students under 18 need written permission to go on overnight trips.

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## 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 a High School please inform their school and/or their guardian.

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

**Homestay Co-ordinators: Kate M and Belinda .....**  
**09 524-4711**

**After hours emergency ..... 021 605656**

