



HOMESTAY PROVIDERS & THIRD PARTY INFORMATION Handbook

2024

ISC

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Contents page.

| | page |
|--|-------------|
| What is Homestay? | 03 |
| Living with an International Student | 03 |
| Welfare Responsibilities | 04 |
| Working with Children Check | 05 |
| Homestay Payments | 06 |
| Homestay Responsibility Agreement | 06 |
| On arrival | 07 |
| Student Responsibilities | 08 |
| Student Related Issues | 08 |
| Attendance | 08 |
| Illness | 09 |
| Student Independence/Privacy | 09 |
| School holidays | 09 |
| School Travel Policy | 09 |
| Going out | 10 |
| Visitors and overnight stay arrangement | 11 |
| Communication with student | 11 |
| Monitoring Homestay/ Visits | 11 |
| Giving notice | 12 |
| Complaint Procedure | 12 |
| Communication with school | 12 |
| 2024/2025 School Dates | 13 |
| DHA Student Visa Conditions | 14 |
| East Doncaster Secondary College Homestay Policy | 15 |
| Returning Home for a Visit-procedure | 16 |
| Airport transfer during school year | 17 |
| EDSC Work Policy | 17 |
| Summary of duties/responsibilities of homestay provider | 18 |
| Critical Incident Policy | 19 |
| Responding to Critical Incidents | 20 |

Information for Homestay Providers and Third Parties

The provision of quality homestay accommodation for international students is one of the most important responsibilities undertaken by schools in the Department of Education and Training's (DET) International Student Program.

Please read the following guidelines before signing the Homestay Responsibility Agreement.

What is Homestay?

Homestay is a term used to describe full board accommodation offered by a family, a couple or a single person (over 21), for which a set weekly fee is charged. This fee covers all expenses associated with providing food and shelter to an international student. This includes providing:

- A single room for the student's exclusive use
- Three meals a day, seven days a week, including snacks. Dinner should be a cooked meal.
- Facilities – a bed, wardrobe, towels and linen
- Utilities – gas, electricity, heating and water costs
- Cleaning services of common living areas
- Use of shared living areas within residence
- Study facilities – desk, study light, bookcase.
- Internet access for study, email, research

Note : Landline Telephone and/or significantly higher use of internet expenses are the responsibility of the international student and are to be paid in addition to the homestay fee.

This accommodation option is also available to families where the parents wish to nominate a specific person (what we call a Parent-Nominated Homestay) in Victoria to provide accommodation for their child, but where that individual is **not** a parent or Department of Home Affairs (DHA) approved relative able to provide welfare.

The homestay experience is an excellent way for students to improve their English, learn more about Australian culture and to make the most of their international education experience. It is essential that homestay accommodation is of high quality, treats students as part of the family and provides a safe, comfortable and caring environment.

No more than **three** international students should be placed in one homestay from any education provider including East Doncaster Secondary College. Legal issues may arise where several homestay students are accommodated at one domestic residence, and can contravene a range of Victorian legislation and many local council planning laws.

Homestay host parents **must** reside at the same address as students.

Living with an International Student

Host families are encouraged to assist the student's cultural adjustment and support their community and social integration. Australian families with children attending the same school provide an opportunity for the student to develop social relationships which strengthen their cultural experience.

International students studying in the schools sector are teenagers, and arriving in a strange country can be a new and daunting experience for them. They will have to adjust to a different lifestyle, food, culture and language and many will also have very high expectations for academic achievement. Students may initially feel homesick or lonely and may show a lack of enthusiasm at times. Tiredness and minor illness is often an initial reaction. To overcome these feelings of cultural dislocation, we ask that you are supportive and understanding during this period.

Homestay parents play an important role in providing support, stability and a nurturing home environment during an international student's stay in Australia. Host families are encouraged to assist the student's cultural adjustment and support their community and social integration. Australian families with children attending the same school provide an opportunity for the student to develop social relationships and shared experiences that strengthen the homestay relationships and value cultural experience.

Some points to consider:

- Some international students may have had maids/servants or grandparents in their home and not be used to doing household chores.
- Many international students may not be used to eating a western diet and homestay parents should be aware of any food a student cannot eat due to religious/cultural reasons. Many students appreciate the addition of rice with the evening meal. Some students are accustomed to eating a small snack (small meal) when they come home from school.

Placement of a Student in Homestay Accommodation

An international student will be carefully matched to a compatible homestay family. Suitability will be determined according to the information provided on the Homestay Profile.

The International Student Coordinator (ISC) at the school will contact you as soon as the student's arrival details are finalised. The student will be collected from the airport by a representative from the school and brought to your home (except where there is a Third Party arrangement). Sometimes there may be a delay in the arrival of a student due to the length of time taken to obtain a visa. Please let the ISC at the host school know how long you are willing to keep the homestay placement available.

Welfare Responsibilities

The ISC manages day-to-day support services such as:

- information and advice to students, parents and homestay providers
- homestay accommodation placement and periodic management (at least six monthly visits)
- supervision of student reporting and monitoring as required by DET
- provision of student reports and feedback to parents
- critical incident and management
- attendance/academic performance issues including parent teacher conferences
- Providing consent for excursions, camps if authority has been delegated from Principal

The Principal is responsible for overseeing all accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for international students at the school. This includes:

- accommodation, support and welfare arrangements for all international students
- liaison with the International Education Division regarding complex or significant international student management matters
- giving interim consent to medical treatment in emergencies
- dispute resolution where issues relate to homestay or the ISC
- We do ask that homestays sight and sign any notices or permission forms that come home, prior to the school representative signing to ensure you are kept up to date with school activities.

Please note: you are not the student's guardian. Homestay providers are not responsible for the student's overall welfare. Any welfare issues concerning the student should be immediately raised with the school's International Student Coordinator. We ask that you report any wellbeing issues with the ISC immediately.

Homestay Briefing

Homestay parents along with the host school and the DET are required to exercise a duty of care towards international students. It is therefore necessary for homestay families to be provided with a briefing program prior to the overseas student arriving at their home. This briefing program is usually done during the initial homestay inspection with the ISC and an annual follow up is done at the Homestay afternoon tea. The briefing will outline the following:

- Child safety policies and reporting obligations and Homestay terms and conditions
- A knowledge and understanding of the needs of adolescents
- An understanding of cultural, linguistic and religious differences
- An understanding of the needs of young people away from their home environment
- A flexible approach to matters of discipline, house rules and cooperative living
- What to do if a problem occurs.

Working with Children Check

Working with Children Check

The Working with Children (WWC) Check was introduced by the Department of Justice in 2006 and aims to protect children (under the age of 18 years) from sexual and/or physical harm. People who work or volunteer in certain types of child-related work will be required to apply for a WWC Check. The Department of Justice has advised the International Education Division that people providing homestay accommodation will be required to obtain a 'Volunteer' WWC Check.

Note: Police checks are not required for homestay providers. All persons in the homestay over the age of 18 (including International students) are required to obtain a WWC Check

The homestay provider will need to complete an application form online lodge it with participating Australia Post outlets with:

- Proof of identify
- A passport size photo

Applications should be completed online and the *application summary receipt* must be kept as evidence of submitting an application. There is no fee for volunteers; the Department of Justice has indicated to the International Education Division that homestay providers will be considered "volunteers" for the purpose of the WWC Check.

Applicants will automatically pass the WWC Check if they have no relevant criminal offences and will be issued with a WWC Check Card. This card is valid for five years and lists the applicants name, signature, photograph, expiry date and card type, i.e. voluntary.

Further information on the WWC Check can be found at:

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>

Cost and Payment Arrangements

The price of homestay accommodation is an amount set by the college and agreed to by the student's parents and the homestay provider prior to the commencement of the accommodation arrangement.

Payment of homestay fee has to be made by the date specified in the Homestay Responsibility Agreement, which is signed by all parties upon the student entering the homestay.

The initial payment should include **two weeks homestay fee in advance. The bond, which is the equivalent of two weeks rent, is payable to the school.**

There are a number of payment options and these include:

Payment directly from student, payment via internet banking, payment from parent or third party.

Payments can be made;

- weekly
- fortnightly
- every 4 weeks (this is the most common and easier for all parties to calculate)

Provide your student with a calendar and receipts. Mark when each payment is due so there is no confusion.

Many homestay families provide students with a receipt upon payment. Receipt books can be purchased at Newsagents, OfficeWorks or any stationary shop. It is a good idea for both you and the student to sign the receipt.

Homestays will collect and manage homestay fees and will implement an appropriate homestay payment arrangement.

Homestay providers with concerns about homestay payments should contact the ISC. Parents will be contacted and every effort will be made to resolve the situation.

Returning home/School Camp

If a student returns home for the school holidays but intends to return to the homestay a **holding fee** for the duration of the holidays (maximum 25% of the homestay fee, currently **\$100 per week**), which has been established in the homestay agreement, is usually paid before the student's departure date. If parents visit students in Australia and students choose to stay overnight with them, the full homestay fee is still required to be paid.

Please refer to the Returning Home for a visit–procedure page 16

The bond is to be paid to the school upon arrival (two weeks homestay fee, currently **\$780**) and is **refundable** at the conclusion of the homestay period after all expenses have been paid and the house key is returned.

Homestays are asked to check the student's room for any damage prior to student leaving. Any damage must be reported to the ISC. Students and/or their parents are required to reimburse homestay providers for any repair or damage to property during the student's time of stay. A quote for the damage or repair is required and needs to be provided within two weeks of the student leaving.

Any advance payment for homestay accommodation must be refunded by the homestay provider to the student (overpayment).

Homestay Responsibility Agreement

The **Homestay Responsibility Agreement** is a contract between the homestay provider, student, school and parents. It lists the rules and expectations of the homestay. The homestay is asked to sit down with the student and to take the time to go through the agreement explaining the house rules, and student expectations. Payment details/methods need to be clearly listed. The **Homestay**

Responsibility Agreement needs to be signed by the homestay host and the student shortly after student arrival and returned to the college. The college will sign and send to parents. Copies will be provided to the homestay and the student.

Students are signing the Homestay Responsibility Agreement to acknowledge they are being made aware of its content.

The Homestay Responsibility Agreement should set out:

1. The obligations and expectations of the homestay provider and the student.
2. The weekly/fortnightly/monthly cost of homestay, bond amount, payment arrangements and holiday/return (holding fee) arrangements.

Keeping records

It is a good idea to keep a diary specifically to record/document anything to do with your International Student/s.

Write down key dates, appointments, key contact numbers, fee due dates, incidents, late arrivals, disagreements and any communication had with student.

On Arrival

On arrival, the following will need to be clearly explained to the student as outlined in Homestay Responsibility Agreement for international students:

- house rules and expectations
- use of household facilities, such as the washing machine, microwave, kettle and water use etc.
- making and receiving international calls from home
- Access to kitchen, laundry (who will do this)
- Internet/landline phone access.
- Curfews
- Rooms not to be used
- Rules about friends visiting and sleeping over
- What to do if sick

Checklist- things to do within first couple days of student arrival- see summary pg 18 for more details

- help student settle in and show them around home and around local area
- go through and sign Homestay Agreement
- assist students in opening a bank account, purchase Myki card, purchasing a SIM card and uniform
- show students location of bus stops and explain bus routes to EDSC, Police Station, Shops, Parks
Go to www.ptv.vic.gov.au for routes and bus timetables

Note:

1. Landline telephone use is the responsibility of the international student as agreed in Homestay Responsibility Agreement.
2. Students will need to be provided with a house key and any alarm/security passwords.

Student Responsibilities

Students should be made aware of their responsibilities which include:

- following all rules set by homestay
- keeping their bedroom and study area tidy
- keeping other areas of the house tidy after use, including the kitchen, bathroom and toilet
- keeping their valuables/personal possessions safe and not to leave them lying around the house
- placing valuables in a safety deposit box or with the homestay family for safekeeping.
- respecting the property of homestay hosts.
- limited internet downloads

Student related issues

➤ Internet Access/Usage

In most circumstances it is expected that homestay families will have internet access in the home. While students are responsible for their own landline telephone call costs, and can manage these by using personal mobile phones, telephone cards and reverse charge calls, internet access can present some problems.

Students should be reminded that they should not provide any personal information such as student visa status, family details, contact addresses in Australia and/or overseas, and banking details via online chat rooms, discussion boards, forums, etc. Homestay providers should encourage students to use direct, secured email accounts to communicate with family and friends, as opposed to public chat rooms and forums where personal information can be extracted for criminal purposes. For this reason, students are asked to keep their bedroom door open at all times for accountability, except for private use and we ask host families to monitor this.

Under no circumstances should homestay providers sign any internet, gym memberships or mobile phone contracts for or on behalf of students.

➤ Student Attendance at School

Homestay parents need to actively monitor student attendance and are required to provide in writing a note of explanation if a student is absent from school for any reason.

Please contact the college or ISC in the morning and inform us of the student's absence.

Students should **not** be making any appointments during the school day. Any appointments are to be made for before or after school.

DHA visa regulations allow non-attendance for 20% of contact hours to cover occasional absences and illnesses, including illness supported by a medical certificate. International students not attending school at least 80% of the time (over a term) are in breach of their visa conditions and may face visa cancellation.

If you have any concerns over the student's attendance in school, please bring them to the attention of the school's ISC.

- In order to meet Visa Condition 8202 students must attend at least 80% (VCE students must attend 90%) of all school days – this includes excursions, information days, sporting carnivals, examinations etc. (a copy of the DHA Student Visa Conditions has been provided for you)

Attendance is monitored daily and if below 90% students may be placed on a school compliance contact.

➤ **Illness**

All students are required to maintain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) during their stay in Australia. All overseas students will receive their Medibank Private card and number when they arrive at the school (if with Medibank as individual cover). Students may initially need assistance with making medical and dental appointments. If a student is ill and is not able to attend school the host parent will be required to notify the school.

Students must see a doctor if they are unable to attend school after 2 consecutive days. It is expected that they return to school with the medical certificate. Students should only be kept home if they are too unwell to be at school. Students are discouraged from staying home because they have a slight headache or stomach ache.

There is a full time nurse at the college. If the student feels unwell whilst at school the nurse will determine whether or not the student is to be sent home. The homestay will be contacted and asked to pick up the student.

When visiting a doctor or dentist students are expected to pay the full doctor's fee. They are then required to go to a Medibank office or other Health Insurance Provider to collect their refund (or may receive a cheque). Students will need to be shown where to find a Medibank branch. This may now also be done through an App.

➤ **Student independence/privacy**

Privacy is important, and personal possessions and personal space of students should be respected.

Students should be provided with a house key.

Encourage students to clean and tidy their own rooms and to clean common areas of the home (such as bathrooms)

Some students may have after-school activities and may be home later than expected. Students are expected to notify their homestay providers by 5pm if they will not be home for dinner or if they will be home late. In such a case, students should check if expected time of arrival is permissible with the host.

It is reasonable to expect students to be home at a specified time. Homestay providers should set curfews for students to be home on week nights (6pm) and weekends (9pm).

Students need to ask permission from their homestay families if they wish to go out. For safety reasons they should tell homestay family where they are going, who they are going with and what time they expect to return.

➤ **School Holidays**

Students need to inform their school and host family in advance if they are returning home for the school holidays or in limited circumstances, with school and parental permission, staying with local relatives/friends. Homestay policy dictates that students are not allowed to have sleep overs unless approved by the college in advance.

➤ **Local or Interstate Travel Policy**

- This policy applies to students who have been issued a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) letter. The policy does not apply to students residing with a parent or a DHA approved relative.
- Any trip taken within Victoria or interstate must be done so with the written approval of the student's parent and be endorsed by the school Principal or Assistant Principal. In the case where a student is living in a homestay, the homestay provider should be advised of the arrangements and be provided with details of the student's travel plan.

- Students will be able to travel, subject to the above approvals, in the following circumstances:
 1. The student is travelling with his or her homestay family on a holiday.
 2. The student is travelling on a school camp or excursion supervised by school staff.
 3. The student is travelling with a person (s) approved by the student's school principal holding Working with Children checks. This applies to students 18 or over.
 4. The student is travelling on a commercial interstate package tour which is provided by a registered company, is specifically designed for students and includes appropriate supervision or chaperone arrangements, and involves no independent travel, i.e. pick up and drop off is at the homestay, the school or an assembly point designated by the school. School Permission is required.
 5. The student is travelling in the company of a direct family member over 21 years of age (parent, sibling, aunt/uncle) who will accept responsibility for the student during the travel.
 6. The student is travelling to a sporting or club event as part of a local team or group and will be under the care and supervision of the club or association during the trip. In these circumstances it is expected that students will be supervised at all times by adults who hold Working with Children checks.

Suitable arrangements regarding the student's holiday plans should be made prior to the student's departure. Dates of departure and return are at the discretion of the host school's principal who will take into consideration the attendance requirements mandated under the student's visa conditions (i.e. the student must be able to maintain attendance of 80% or more).

If wanting to return home students must first seek the permission of the ISC and must complete the necessary documents. See page 16 for East Doncaster Secondary College Returning Home for visit procedures.

Parents of student must then email permission to ISC for their child to return home and only then are they able to purchase tickets.

Please contact the ISC well in advance if you want to go on a holiday so that alternative accommodation can be arranged for the student/s. Students MUST not to be left at home without an adult with a WWC approved by the ISC.

➤ Going Out

Some students may be from cultures where they are allowed a lot of freedom in terms of going out and socialising. As a homestay provider you have the prerogative to impose a curfew. Students are expected to abide by these rules.

Students will need to ask permission from their homestay family if they wish to go out. For safety reasons students should tell their host family where they are going, with whom, and the expected time of return.

The Homestay Responsibility Agreement should set out simple timeframes for when students are expected to be home on school nights and weekends.

Please reiterate that students should try to return home by an agreed time. If students think that they will be home later than the agreed time they must ring you and let you know.

Sometimes students may have after-school activities and may be home later than expected. Students must notify you if they will be home late or if they will not be home for dinner by 5pm.

Please remind students of the following for their own safety:

- It is advisable not to carry too much cash.
- It is best to travel in a group whenever possible.
- Avoid catching public transport late at night.
- Read public transport timetables carefully so as not to miss the last train or tram home.
- Avoid risky areas in Melbourne at night (Box Hill, City etc.).

➤ Visitors

Students should ask permission from their homestay family before inviting friends to visit them. Some homestay families may agree to provide meals for friends when given appropriate notice.

➤ Overnight Stay Arrangements

Homestay policy dictates that international students **must not** stay overnight away from their designated homestay.

However, if such a situation is requested there is a process. The school must have written parental permission (in advance) to consider granting permission for an overnight stay away from their designated homestay provider, and must provide the school with the name and contact phone number of the person they are staying with. All persons over 18 in the home must have a WWCC. Students must continue to pay full homestay fees during this time.

Note: Homestay host families must notify the school International Student Coordinator if overnight stay arrangements are not observed or if overnight stays become frequent or are of concern.

If a student in homestay accommodation leaves without notice or commences staying overnight away from their designated homestay without permission, the homestay provider must report the matter immediately to the school's ISC or Principal as this is a breach of the student's visa conditions. **Note: A breach of this visa condition is a very serious matter and could result in a student's visa cancellation.**

➤ Communication with student

It is important for international students to communicate with their homestay family so they can learn more about each other. It is also a good way for international students to improve their English. Some guidelines for communication include:

- Using English in the home
- Talking to the student about school activities, studies, family and background.
- Checking their diaries, Compass timetables for excursions and any school newsletters.
- Monitoring their academic results on Compass and discussing their progress
- Encouraging students to be involved in family activities.
- Encouraging students to watch the news, English TV (movies, documentaries, series etc.), listen to the radio, podcasts or read the newspaper.

Monitoring Homestay

Schools will monitor students who are placed in homestay accommodation and maintain regular contact with providers of the accommodation to ensure the students' successful adjustment to life and study in Victoria.

Schools will also conduct an annual review of their homestay providers and inspect the homestay at least every six months to ensure that student needs are being met.

Note: Homestay visits will be conducted every six months by the ISC or Assistant to the ISC.

Giving Notice

Once a homestay family has been allocated by the school, this family will be reserved for a student. It is therefore expected that the student remain in that accommodation for a reasonable period of time (minimum of three months) before giving notice, unless exceptional circumstances occur. If an international student is not happy with the homestay accommodation that has been arranged, they can request that a more suitable one be found. Students will have to give the school and homestay provider reasons for requesting the change and will have to give the school and homestay provider at least two weeks' notice if they want to change homestay. A student who moves without giving two weeks' notice will forfeit their bond.

Alternatively, if a homestay provider wishes to terminate the homestay agreement, the student and the host school must be given at least two weeks' notice and the host school's approval should be sought before proceeding with the termination.

Homestay arrangements cannot be changed by a student. A student cannot leave/change homestay without the permission of the ISC.

Complaint Procedure

Schools are responsible for resolving any disagreements or disputes that may occur between the student, the student's parents and the homestay family. It is necessary to contact the school if there is any disagreement, dispute, discomfort, danger or concern about the international student.

If the homestay is found to be unsuitable for either party or if there is any danger or a dispute that cannot be resolved, it may be necessary to move the student to another homestay provider.

Communication with the school and the ISC.

Homestay providers are encouraged to keep in contact with the school and the ISC regularly.

We ask that homestay providers read the **college newsletter** to keep informed with what is happening in the college. It can be viewed on Compass or at: www.eastdonsc.vic.edu.au

Students have 3 cycle reports per semester (6 in total each year). Each cycle report is made up of various assessments called learning tasks. The end of cycle report is made up of bar graphs depicting student's goals, academic results and behaviour/attitude. Please view the student's reports each cycle online using your Compass login username and password.

Parent teacher student conferences are held twice a year in terms 1 and 3. Please come along with your student and speak to their teachers about their progress.

School Dates 2024/25

The following is a list of dates that will be important for you during this year. Visa conditions require all International students to attend all these important events as part of the college program.

Students must not leave Australia before the date given below. If students leave to go overseas during term breaks they must be back for the start of each term.

Please keep this list and mark all dates on your calendar.

Term dates for 2024

Term 1

30 January 2024 to 28 March 2024

Term 2

15 April 2024 to 28 June 2024

Term 3

15 July 2024 to 20 September 2024

Term 4

7 October 2024 to 20 December 2024

Term 1 2025 - commences 29 January (students start)

Students must return to Australia no later than 28th January 2025

Term dates for 2025

Term 1

29 January 2025 to 4 April 2025

Term 2

22 April 2025 to 4 June 2025

Term 3

21 July 2025 to 19 September 2025

Term 4

6 October 2025 to 19 December 2025

DHA Student Visa Conditions –

DHA attaches various conditions to student visas. Schools should be aware of the student's visa conditions and remind students of their responsibilities.

The following are the mandatory visa conditions imposed on all student visas in the school sector subclass:

Satisfaction of attendance/academic requirements – condition 8202

You must remain enrolled in a registered course. You **must** attend at least 80% of the contact hours scheduled for each term or semester of your course. You must have a satisfactory academic result for each term or semester.

Permission to Work – condition 8105

You cannot work more than 20 hours per week when your course is in session.

Adequate arrangements for health insurance – condition 8501

You must maintain adequate arrangements for health insurance during your stay in Australia.

Satisfying requirements of student visa - condition 8516

You must continue to satisfy the requirements for grant of your student visa. This means, for example, that your main course of study must continue to be a course in the education sector that matches your student visa, and that you must continue to have sufficient financial capacity to support your study and stay in Australia.

Change of accommodation and general welfare arrangements – condition 8532

You must maintain accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements that have been approved by your education provider if you:

- Have not turned 18
- Are not an AusAid student or a Defence student
- Are not staying in Australia with:
 - A parent
 - A custodian
 - or
 - A relative who has been nominated by your parent or a custodian is aged at least 21 and is of good character

Note: you must not change those arrangements without the written approval of your education provider.

Notifying address, change of address, and change of education provider – condition 8533

You must notify your education provider of your residential address in Australia within 7 days of arriving in Australia. You must notify your education provider of any change in your residential address within 7 days of the change. You must notify your education provider of a change of education provider within 7 days of receiving the electronic Confirmation of Enrolment certificate or evidence of enrolment.

Below is a description of a discretionary condition that **may** be attached to a student visa:

Condition 8303

You must not become involved in any activities that are disruptive to, or in violence threatening harm to, the Australian community or a group within the Australia community.

Further information on visa conditions can be found on the DHA website: www.homeaffairs.gov.au

Homestay Policy

Rationale: Where parents opt for DET to arrange accommodation, the Department through the school, is responsible for provision of accommodation, support and general welfare to the student. These arrangements shall be in place for the period that the student will be under 18 while in Australia. This policy has been developed to meet the requirements of the ESOS National Code 2018 and Student Visa (Condition 8532) which require that appropriate arrangements have been made for the accommodation, welfare, and support of students under 18 years of age.

This policy is designed to be consistent with the PPSSU guidelines.

Policy:

- It is a condition of enrolment at East Doncaster Secondary College that all international students must reside in homestay accommodation (including students who are over 18).
- The school will organise homestay accommodation of high quality and which provides a safe, comfortable and caring environment.
- The homestay accommodation will be provided by a host which may be a family, couple or single person and need not be of Anglo-Saxon descent.
- Students may not change the homestay arrangements without consultation with the College.
- Working with Children Cards will be organised for the host/s as well as a homestay inspection performed at least six weeks prior and not more than six months prior to the student moving in.
- The maximum number of students per homestay is 3 per Victorian government school.
- A weekly fee of \$390 will be charged. This covers expenses associated with the provision of the following homestay services:
 - Single bedroom for the student's exclusive use
 - Three meals per day, seven days per week (cooked evening meal)
 - Facilities including a bed, wardrobe, desk, study light, bookcase, Wi-Fi access, towels, and linen.
 - Gas, electricity, heating, and water costs
 - Cleaning services of communal living areas
 - Use of living areas within residence
- Should the student use or require higher internet usage an extra fee will be charged. The fee should be discussed with the College.
- The initial payment will include at least two weeks' homestay fee in advance to the host and a bond that is the equivalent of two weeks' homestay fee payable to the school.
- The whole bond will be refunded to the student at the end of the enrolment with the school provided the student's room is free from damages or stains and the room is left in the same condition as when the student arrived. In the event of damages or stains an invoice/quote must be supplied to the school from the homestay to determine the amount of bond to be refunded.
- During holidays a holding fee to secure the homestay accommodation is required to cover the student's absence (\$100 per week, maximum 25%).
- If a homestay provider terminates the homestay agreement, at least two weeks' notice is given to the student and College and all rent paid in advance of the departure date is to be refunded.
- Where a student moves out of a homestay, at least two weeks' notice must be given to the homestay provider and College. Giving less than this may result in the bond being forfeited.
- Students of a different sex will not be permitted to live in the same homestay.
- Students will be asked to sign a Homestay Responsibility Agreement on commencement of their enrolment. This will outline the house rules as well as homestay costs and methods of payment.
- Overnight stays are not permitted. The only time they may be considered is if the school receives written parental permission in advance with relevant contact details (names, address, mobile) and all parties over 18 have working with children's cards.
- Students and/or parents are required to reimburse homestay providers for any damage to property caused by a student, or costs incurred by the student during the time of residence.
- Complaints that cannot be resolved by either the homestay provider or the student should be referred in writing to the College.
- Students must not engage in any of the following activities whilst living in Homestay and being enrolled in East Doncaster SC or they will be subject to school disciplinary measures which may include detention,

suspension, expulsion, police contact, report to immigration and parental involvement: smoking, alcohol consumption, vaping, drugs

- The College will monitor progress of homestay arrangements, including twice yearly homestay inspections.

International Student Holiday Plan 2024

Returning home for a visit - Procedures for East Doncaster Secondary College

1. Complete the International Student Request to Travel Home form and return it to the International Student Coordinator.
2. Parents must email the International Student Coordinator with dates of travel listed.
3. Only if permission is granted students may purchase/book their ticket.
4. Students must provide the International Student Coordinator with a copy of their ticket.

A ticket to return home must not be purchased until Steps 1 and 2 are completed.

A student must not leave Australia before the end of a term or return after the start of a term.

Rules about returning home:

- Students can only travel during school holidays.
- Students cannot travel during the school term
- Tickets to return home must not be purchased without the permission from the International Student Coordinator (ensure steps 1 +2 are completed).
- Students are only allowed to return home. They are not permitted to travel elsewhere or to go on a holiday without written parental permission to ISC. They are not allowed to travel interstate unless accompanied by a parent or the homestay family.
- Students must return before the start of term.

Term Holiday Dates for 2024

Term 1

29 March 2024 to 14 April 2024

Term 2

29 June 2024 to 14 July 2024

Term 3

21 September 2024 to 6 October 2024

Term 4

EDSC International students must comply with these dates:

Year 12 students are advised **not** to leave Australia before 6 December 2024

Year 11 students must **not** leave Australia until after 6 December 2024

Year 10 students must **not** leave Australia until after 13 December 2024

Year 7-9 students may **not** leave Australia until after 13 December 2024

If travelling at the Christmas break you must return on or prior to 28 January 2025

Airport Transfers

Homestays are not obligated to take students to or pick students up from the airport when they are returning home for the holidays, however, many of our homestays are happy to do this particularly at Christmas time. Homestays may negotiate a small petrol fee with student for this service.

East Doncaster Policy on Work

The college is of the view that international students should not work in ongoing part time employment. Students have been sent to East Doncaster Secondary College to study, not to work. Student must make their studies a priority.

Students who wish to work must

- seek permission from the ISC
- have parents submit a written request outlining their reasons for wishing their child to work
- have attended East Doncaster Secondary College for a period of 6 months before requesting permission
- must have demonstrated sound work practice and maintained consistent strong academic performance
- must have Permission to Work Visa.

Those who currently have employment are to ensure that they do not work more than 20 hours a week.

If their academic performance falls they will be asked to cease employment.

Homestay providers are asked to inform the ISC if they believe their student is working.

Summary of Duties/Responsibilities as a homestay provider

At East Doncaster Secondary College we ask that our homestay providers take on an **active role** in supporting and monitoring the international student. We ask that our homestay providers treat the student as part of their family and involve them in family activities. We want our students to have a positive experience here in Australia and to feel like they belong to a family and are not just a boarder.

Initially:

- Assist student to settle in
- Get to know their likes and dislikes
- Familiarise them with the local area
- Show them how to get to East Doncaster (bus stops etc.) purchase and load MYKI card.
- Assist students to open a bank account
- Assist students to purchase a SIM card for their mobile phone. Do not enter into any contracts on behalf of student.
- Assist students with the purchase of uniform and books
- Ensure that the Homestay Agreement Responsibility contract is completed, signed and returned to the college immediately after the student has arrived. Homestay costs rules and expectations need to be clearly listed and explained to the student.
- Provide them with a house key (not to be labelled)

Ongoing:

- Provide Duty of care for the student/s
- Provide 3 meals and snacks (a variety of nutritional meals with dinner to be a cooked meal)
- Treat them as part of the family. Include them in your family outings.
- Ensure students are eating dinner with the family
- Monitor student attendance – Contact the school if student will not be attending school and supply absence note the next day. Please ensure student sees a doctor and obtains a medical certificate if away for subsequent days in a row.
- Monitor academic performance using Compass. Check to see what they are doing in their bedrooms. Insist on the door being open for accountability during study time.
- Endeavour to attend Parent Teacher Student Conferences.
- Contact the ISC for any incidents, defiance and/or concerns.
- Ensure student meets curfew (students should not be out after 6pm on a weeknight and past 9pm on a weekend) .
- Monitor use of computer and downloads.
- Do not travel and leave the student alone overnight at any time.
- Ensure that anyone over 18 who resides or stays short term has a Working with Children Card.
- Do not allow students to sleep over at a friend's or 'family's' house, unless permission has been granted by parents in writing AND the ISC in advance.
- Do not allow students to travel interstate without permission from school.
- Inform school if student is working.
- Ensure student completes the Holiday travel plan if expecting to return home for a visit.
- Attend Homestay Afternoon Tea meetings run by the ISC at the college.

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY:

Responding to a traumatic or critical incident in which the school is involved

The school may become directly or indirectly involved in a tragic or traumatic event.

The incident may involve loss of life, serious injury or emotional disturbance. The incident may occur in the school environment or outside. It may involve staff, students or those close to them. The network of those involved in a traumatic event can be wide, especially if it directly involves the school. Feelings of grief and loss can continue over long periods of time.

Counselling is/will be provided for all those who need it. This may include many who do not seem to be closely connected to the event or the individuals involved. The school may also be in a position to help grieving families at difficult times, e.g. through the school's participation in the funeral service.

While school should operate as normally as possible, some degree of flexibility should exist. It is essential that a Critical Incident Recovery Team be formed to manage the short and long term effects and provide clear, accurate information at all times.

Action to be taken as a result of a tragic/traumatic event which involves the school

Incidents vary in complexity. These guidelines provide a framework for action and would not necessarily be followed in all cases. However, the following 4 principles must be followed:

- provide clear, accurate information
- describe the actions to be followed
- provide help for all affected
- maintain a normal school program as close as possible

Obtain accurate information. Deal only with substantiated facts.

As soon as possible inform staff, especially those most directly involved. Inform close friends and family individually. Allow questions and discussion as they arise. Dispel rumours.

Appoint a skilled Critical Incident Recovery Team to assist in the management of the incident. The team may include staff members, psychologists, counsellors, external DET personnel, support agencies etc. The size and composition of the team will be related to the nature of the incident. The names of the Critical Incident Recovery Team members will be distributed and the role of the team will be explained to others.

As soon as possible provide information to the community as to what has happened, and what is being done.

Appoint a skilled Critical Incident Recovery Team member to respond to media enquiries. A written press release may be useful. If necessary, protect others from contact with the media. Advice regarding this may be obtained from the DET Emergency Communications Centre and the DET Media Unit.

Establish an open line of contact with the family or families directly involved.

Provide out of school hours contact if necessary. This could be as simple as circulating the Principal's telephone number. In more complex situations it may mean maintaining telephone contact at the school.

Continue contact with the family to identify their expectations of the school, e.g. student participation in funeral or memorial service.

Try to identify those most likely to need help, e.g. classmates, teacher, special friends. Some students not directly affected may become distressed. The class teacher may be the person to whom students first turn for help.

Ensure that counselling help is available. Contact the Regional Office and/or DET if necessary. All emergency or criminal activity, in which the safety or well-being of staff or students is at risk, or where there is a threat to property, must be reported immediately to the Department's 24 hour Emergency and Security Management Branch on (03) 9589 6266. Ensure that there are suitable places in which this can take place. Be prepared to modify the timetable and other arrangements so that people are free to make use of available help.

Continue to keep staff, students and parents informed, especially about what has happened and what the school is doing about it.

As soon as possible call students together and provide information about what has happened and what the school is doing about it. A follow up letter home may be important.

Children wishing to attend funerals should do so in the company of their parents. Provide meaningful participation for those not actually attending the service.

Continue normal routines at school but acknowledge the effect of the tragedy upon the school community. Be flexible with those in need of help. Be aware that many people may be deeply affected, e.g. an event may cause a person to recall some traumatic event involving them in the past.

The anniversary may also be a difficult time.

Maintain links with the family. The school and family may wish to develop a memorial garden, erect a memorial plaque, or display a photo in a prominent position in the school.

Be sensitive to staff and student's needs over a period of time.

- consider longer term intervention activities such as counselling or specialist support
- consider establishing an area within the school as a place of remembrance
- reconvene key people at regular intervals to review the school response and effectiveness of planning arrangements
- review the school emergency management plan in light of experience gained
- consider a ritual of marking significant dates
- prepare for legal proceedings if necessary
- remove students name from the roll if deceased
- consider article in school magazine

Reference

- DET's Managing School Emergencies - Minimising the impact of trauma on staff and students

RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS, DISCLOSURES AND SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE FOR HOMESTAY PROVIDERS

YOU MUST TAKE ACTION:

As a homestay provider, you play a critical role in protecting children in your care.

You **must** act by following the 4 critical actions as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or it at risk of being abused.

You **must** act if you form a suspicion/reasonable belief, even if you are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (e.g.: if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse).

ACTION 1: RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

If there is no risk of immediate harm go to ACTION 2

If a child is at immediate risk of harm, you must ensure their safety by:

- Separating the alleged victims and others involved
- Administering first aid
- Calling 000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
- Identifying the contact person at the school for future liaison with Police

When necessary, you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve

ACTION 2: REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, you must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures as soon as possible. Failure to report physical and sexual abuse, may amount to a criminal offence.

You **must** report all instances of suspected child abuse to Victoria Police. This can be done by calling 000 or contacting your local police station: Doncaster Police Station 88413999

You **must** also report all instances of suspected child abuse to the school Principal:
John Roberts 98422244

Do not contact student's parents as this is the Principal's responsibility.

If the source of suspected abuse is from within the school, liaise with Victoria Police and IED in who should be contacted at the school

ACTION 3: CONTACTING PARENTS

The School Principal is responsible for contacting the parents of overseas students. The principal must consult with DHHS Child Protection and/or Victoria police to determine what information can be shared with parents.

ACTION 4: PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

East Doncaster Secondary College **must** provide support for children impacted by abuse. This should include the development of a Student Support Plan in consultation with wellbeing professionals. Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals. Homestay Providers care for EDSC international students by living with them with the School as the Welfare Provider.

If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but you still hold **significant concerns** for their wellbeing you **must** still act. The International Student Coordinator mobile is 0455099455 and Assistant Principal is 0427381350.