

STUDENT HOMESTAY INFORMATION

Welcome to Hamilton Boys' High School

Let's get started...

We are so excited to have you join us as an international student. Before you travel to New Zealand, we recommend reading this booklet with your family. It covers some common questions and helps you get ready for your trip.

Each homestay family is different - some families are married, some are single, some have children, and some don't. While every family is unique, all of them are enthusiastic about sharing their culture and making you feel at home. Each homestay family has been carefully selected, interviewed, and checked by the International Homestay Manager, and many have hosted international students before, so they know how to help you adjust.

Staying with a homestay family is different from staying in a hotel or Airbnb. As a family member you will be included in all family activities, such as going away on day trips with them, celebrating family occasions and helping in the house with some small chores. The first few weeks might be a bit of an adjustment for you and your new family, but remember, if you need support or have any questions, we're here for you at school.

Living with a family, means that you will be very well cared for, and you will have someone to talk to if you have a problem, are unhappy, or are unwell. Living in a new country means adapting to new foods, customs, and ways of doing things. It's completely normal to feel homesick or find things a bit strange at first. Embrace these feelings as part of your adventure. Staying with a homestay family is a wonderful way to dive into our culture and improve your language skills. Enjoy your experience, and don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything!



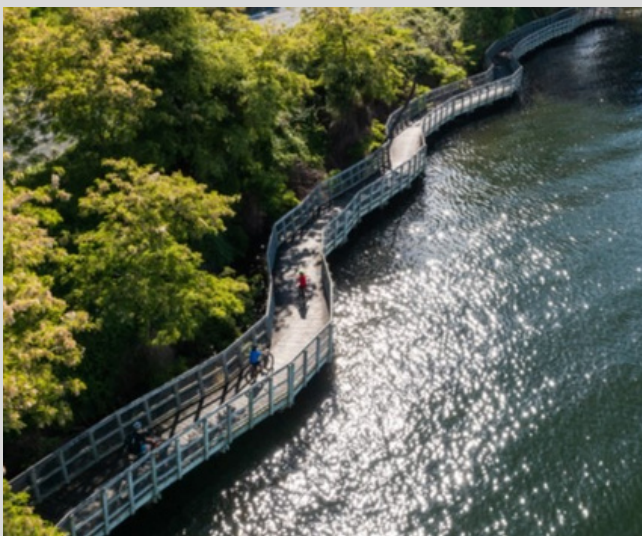
Arrival in New Zealand

We will arrange a shuttle bus to meet you at Auckland International Airport when you arrive and take you to your accommodation in Hamilton. When you enter the Arrivals Hall at Auckland International Airport please walk towards the left and look for a driver who is holding your name on a placard or tablet. Please introduce yourself to the driver.

We know travelling along can be a little stressful and tiring, so don't worry - Jayvis Airport Shuttle/ Vanman bus driver will take you straight to your homestay. Once you've settled in, make sure to let your family know that you've arrived safely in New Zealand.

Auckland Airport International Terminal Ground Floor

The Shuttle Bus driver will be waiting in the arrival hall on the left as you exit customs, with a placard with your name. If you can't find the driver, please wait by 'Allpress Espresso' shop. Jayvis Airport Shuttle's phone number is 021 118 0488.



What is a Homestay

It is when a New Zealand family welcomes you into their home and treats you like one of their own children.


- The family will be friendly and make you feel at home.
- You will have your own bedroom with a bed, desk, and places for you to store your clothes, books and belongings.
- They will provide all your meals; breakfast, lunch (on school days this will be a packed lunch), and dinner every day, plus other snacks if you feel hungry between meals.
- They will provide all your linen and bedding requirements.
- They will take care of washing your clothes.
- Assistance with transport if you need to be taken somewhere such as a sports game, to town, or to visit a doctor, but ask them in advance, if you need help with transport.
- You will join in on family activities and routines. When you arrive, the family will give you a tour of their home. This is a great chance to ask any questions and learn about what's expected of you.

When you first arrive, it might be a bit challenging to communicate. Don't be shy—give it a try! It's important to talk with your homestay family.

Let them know what foods you like and dislike and tell your homestay family what you would like for school lunches.

As a member of your New Zealand homestay family, you'll get to join in on family events, outings, and day trips.

Even if you're feeling shy or nervous about trying new things, it's important to participate in these activities. It's a great way to bond with your homestay family and fully experience life in New Zealand.



Charlie (China) says "it's important to talk a lot with your homestay family".



Your homestay family will look after you as if you were their own son, so they need to know where you are at all times after school hours. Remember to go home straight away after school unless you have asked them for permission to visit a friend or go into town. Hamilton City late at night is not a good place for you to be on your own or with friends, so if you are going to be coming home when it is dark, arrange for your homestay family to collect you. Always tell your homestay family where you are going and text them if you have any problems about being home on time.

Most New Zealand families go to bed earlier. You will need to start going to bed earlier than what many of you are accustomed to so that you do not fall asleep during the school day.

Fitting into your family

It's important to treat your homestay house as your own home while being considerate of others living there. Here are some key points to help you fit in:

- Familiarize yourself with your host family's house rules. If anything is unclear, don't hesitate to ask.
- Keep your room tidy.
- Please remember to lock doors and close windows.
- Arrive on time for meals.
- Safe use of all appliances
- Let your homestay family know where you're going and when you'll be back.
- Follow your homestay family and the school's rules about NO smoking, vaping, and alcohol.
- Always use 'Please' and 'Thank you'. New Zealanders value politeness highly, and these simple words are important to us all.

Safety in the Home

- Do not remove or tamper with smoke alarms.
- Make sure you and your homestay family have a fire plan. This plan should include what to do if an alarm goes off, escape routes, and a designated meeting point outside.
- Do not cook, use a heater, or operate any electrical appliances without permission from your homestay family. Always ensure that these appliances are turned off after use.

Safety Outside the Home

- Don't carry large amounts of cash with you. Be more cautious than you might be in your own country.
- The International Department will help you open a bank account. You will receive an EFTPOS card. Keep your PIN confidential—don't write it down or share it with anyone.
- If you lose any bank cards, contact the bank immediately to cancel them. Inform your host family and a staff member from the International Department as well.



Pocket Money

During your stay in New Zealand, you'll need to cover your own expenses for things like entertainment, doctor's visit, medication, clothing, toiletries, extra snacks, entertainment and bus fares. Make sure you have enough money to manage these costs. We would recommend an approximate amount of a minimum of \$50 per week. It's important that your parents provide you with an allowance to cover these expenses.

Food, Mealtimes and Cooking

Most New Zealanders enjoy a variety of international foods, and you can find many ingredients from around the world in local supermarkets and specialty stores.

Your homestay fee covers all your meals, so you don't need to worry about grocery shopping for food. Enjoy the variety of meals and feel free to share your food preferences with your homestay family!

It can be helpful to visit the supermarket with your homestay parent to talk about foods you like and dislike. Dinner is usually the main meal of the day. If you're full, don't hesitate to say, "Thank you, that's enough."

Weekend meals are often more relaxed and casual. If you have any food-related concerns and find it hard to discuss them with your homestay family, you can reach out to the International Homestay Manager for assistance.

Meals in New Zealand

Breakfast

Most breakfasts are casual, with family members helping themselves to toast and/or cereal. If you expect a hot cooked breakfast you will need to get up earlier to prepare it yourself.

Lunch

Students bring a packed lunch to school, which might include sandwiches, fruit, and muesli bars or leftovers from your evening meal. You can use the microwaves in S3 classroom. You will have access to boiling water for noodles.

Dinner

Dinner is a time for family conversation, usually around the dining table. At HBHS, students are expected to be home for dinner with their homestay family each night, typically between 6:00 and 7:00 pm. If you are not going to be home for dinner you must let your homestay family know that morning or before you go out. Also, remember to text your homestay family if you'll be late.

Cooking

If you'd like to cook, just ask your homestay parent. They might enjoy trying dishes from your country, and it's a wonderful way to share your culture with them.

Dinner Preparation

Most families will try to prepare food you'll enjoy. If there's something you can't eat, let your homestay family know. Always show appreciation for their efforts with meals.

Don't be afraid to try new foods.

Offer to Help

- Set the table
- Prepare vegetables
- Clear the table
- Stack the dishwasher

Peng (China) says "don't eat food in your bedroom. It is a place for sleeping and studying".

In New Zealand, it's common for everyone in the family to help with dinner chores, so offering to assist is a nice way to be part of the family.

Dinner Conversation Topics

Your day at school

Your homestay family's day at work or school

Your homework

News from home

The weather and TV news

Interesting things you saw online

Engaging in these topics can help you connect with your homestay family and make mealtime more enjoyable. Remember to put your phone away during mealtimes. In New Zealand, it's polite to chew your food with your mouth closed and to avoid burping or slurping loudly. This will help you fit in smoothly with your homestay family's dining habits.



Your Bedroom

You will have a comfortable bed, a place to store your clothes and a desk and chair in your bedroom. This is your private space. If you find that your room is too cold, let your homestay family know. They can provide you with extra blankets to help keep you warm

Eric (Thailand) says “ask your homestay family where to put your laundry”.

Laundry and Washing

Ask your homestay family where to put your dirty laundry and when they do it each week. They will also give you towels and will provide fresh sheets for you to change, usually on a weekly basis. Wet clothing must not be left in your bedroom or hung over a heater.

The Bathroom

Bathrooms in New Zealand might be different from what you're used to. Since there's no floor drainage, it's important to keep water off the floor. Ask your homestay family how to use the shower, if you are unsure.

Try to keep your showers short—about 10 minutes is usually enough. This helps save electricity and ensures there's enough hot water for everyone in the house.

You'll need to bring your own toiletries, like shampoo, conditioner, shaving cream, face cream, and body wash and buying new supplies as you run out.

Kosei (Japan) reminds you “to keep your room clean and tidy”.

Challenges in a homestay family

If you encounter any issues or are unhappy about something at home, please talk to our International Homestay Manager. By addressing small concerns early it can help prevent them from becoming larger issues.

Our Homestay Manager works hard to match students with suitable families, often leading to positive experiences. Many students build lasting friendships with their homestay family that continue even after they leave New Zealand.

Socialising and Activities

At home

In New Zealand, it's common for families to have dinner together and catch up on their day. After dinner, people may relax by watching television. Join in and watch with them; don't hesitate to ask questions, even if you don't understand everything right away.

New Zealanders also enjoy sports, going to the beach, and taking walks. Participating in these activities is a great way to connect with your new family and experience local culture.



Mao (Japan) says "take every opportunity to spend time with your homestay family and experience new things".

Going out

In New Zealand, families occasionally go out to the movies or dining on weekends, but this is less typical during the week. If you want to go out with friends or do something after school during the week, please follow these guidelines:

- Always ask your homestay family for permission before going out. Let them know where you're going and who you'll be with.
- Ensure your homestay family has phone numbers for your friends' families.
- Make sure your phone is switched on and fully charged.
- Carry your BEE (Bus) card in your wallet for bus travel. Make sure you always have credit on your BEE card.
- Talk with your homestay family about how you will get to and from your sports games, meeting friends, out of school activities.
- Make sure you are home by the agreed time with your homestay family.
- Always prioritize safety and respect your homestay family's house rules.

School Travel Policy

As an international student at HBHS, you are allowed to go on trips with your homestay family and school-organised trips. If you want to go on a supervised overnight trip, you need to get permission from the school and your homestay family. You are **not** allowed to go on unsupervised overnight trips.



Ask the Homestay Manager for the Permission Form to leave Hamilton for a Day Trip/Excursion. You need to complete this form, ask your homestay parent to sign it and return it to the Homestay Manager at least two weeks before your planned travel date. The leave request will then be assessed and you will be informed if it has been approved.

If you want to invite a friend to stay or stay at a friend's home please discuss it with your homestay family first. You need to get permission from your homestay family. They will contact your friend's parents or homestay parents to discuss arrangements and check safety.

There are educational tour providers that offer trips for international students during mid-term breaks, which come highly recommended. For more information, contact the International Centre.

Driving/Travel


- Do not accept a ride in a car from anyone when you are away from your homestay family.
- As an international student, you're not allowed to drive or own a motor vehicle or motorbike.
- Always wear a seatbelt, whether you're in the front or back seat of the car.
- You can only travel in a car with your homestay parent, a HBHS staff member or a person over the age of 25, on a full driver's licence (approved by your homestay family).
- If you ride a bicycle, wearing a safety helmet is a legal requirement. Also, make sure to lock your bike to prevent theft.

Mobile Phone/Internet

- You must have a mobile phone for safety reasons, so your homestay family and the International Centre can reach you anytime.
- Bring your mobile phone from home and purchase a SIM card in New Zealand. We recommend for our long-term students, purchasing a phone plan through our school provider, OneNZ. Unlimited data plan costs approximately \$65 per month.
- Phone usage is not allowed at school between 08:45 am and 3:15 pm.
- All homestay families provide unlimited Wi-Fi access.
- Use the internet appropriately and only during the times agreed upon with your host family.

Student Visas

You have been granted a Student Visa by New Zealand Immigration which allows you to study only at Hamilton Boys' High School. Immigration will check with Ms Heeps to see if you are attending school, studying well, and that you are following the rules. You are not permitted by New Zealand Immigration rules to work unless you are in Year 12 or Year 13. If you would like to work part-time, a letter of approval from your parents and the school is required. A Variation of Condition on your Student Visa will be applied for. You can only apply for the Variation of Condition once you have started Year 12.



Ellande (France) says “try and always say YES to new experiences”.



Things to Do on the Weekend

When you first arrive, it might take a bit of time to make friends and adjust to your homestay family's routine. Your schedule may differ from what you're used to back home. Many New Zealand teenagers work after school and on weekends, so your host siblings might be busy with work or other activities.

If your homestay family is going away and can't take you with them, we will arrange for a short-term homestay family or an adult family member to look after you. Please note that staying alone in the house overnight is not allowed.

When engaging in social activities on weekends, try not to rely on your homestay family for transportation. While they might be able to help with pick-ups or drop-offs occasionally, it's best to ask in advance. Most teenagers in New Zealand are quite independent and use the bus system, bikes, or walk to get around. Once you become familiar with the bus system in Hamilton, getting around will become much easier.

Here are some ideas for things to do on the weekends.

- Join a School Sports Team or Cultural Activity Group
- Join a Local Gym
- Visit Hamilton Lake
- Bike rides
- Watch a Movie
- Take the Bus to Cambridge, Raglan or Auckland (permission required)
- Ten Pin Bowling in Central Hamilton
- Visit the Hamilton Zoo
- Visit the Hamilton Gardens
- Walk Along the Waikato River
- Visit the Waikato Museum
- Play Mini Golf at Centre Place
- Go Shopping at Downtown Plaza or The Base Hamilton
- Attend Concerts and Shows
- Watch a Rugby Game and Support the Local Chiefs Team

Important Information

- No alcohol, vaping, smoking, drugs or weapons.
 - No driving, not permitted to buy a car.
 - Homestay parents must be notified if you intend to:
 - Go out to visit a friend
 - Sleepover at another student's house
 - Not be home to eat your evening meal with them
 - Be late home
 - Day Trip / Excursion (permission is required from the Homestay Manager and you must complete a Permission Form).
 - All students must comply with their Homestay's curfew times and house rules.
 - If you are unwell, you must inform your homestay family as they need to advise HBHS if you are going to be absent from school.
 - You can only travel in a car with your homestay parent, HBHS staff or someone your homestay family permits (this person must be over 25 years of age and hold a full NZ driver's license).
 - Your room is your responsibility. You always need to keep it clean and tidy. Do not eat in your bedroom. Do not leave food, scraps, wrappers or dirty plates in your room.
 - To be able to stay in a hotel or motel you need to:
 - Be accompanied by an adult 25 years of age or older
 - Have been granted permission from the International Centre
 - Have parents consent via email to the International Centre
 - Inviting your friends to sleepover you must:
 - Have permission from your homestay parents
 - Your friends need to have permission from their parents/homestay parents
 - You need to talk to your homestay about the laundry and what is required to have your washing done.
 - If you accidentally spill anything on the carpet or furniture, or break something, please tell your Homestay parents immediately.
 - Please notify the International Centre as soon as possible if you intend to travel so that a shuttle bus can be booked.
- Please remember that your homestay family and the staff at HBHS International Centre are here to support you.



Returning Home for the Christmas Holidays



Notify in Advance

Inform both the International Centre staff and your homestay family of your return travel dates at least five weeks before you leave. This is important because homestay payments are made in advance. Delays in informing them may require you to cover these costs.

Flight Details

Provide the school and your homestay family with your return dates and flight details well in advance so that shuttle bookings can be arranged for your return to New Zealand.

Summer Break

All students are expected to return to their home country for the long summer break after completing their course each year.

Storing Belongings

At the end of the academic year students must remove all their belongings from the homestay. Occasionally a student has too many items to bring home. In this instance please let the Homestay Manager know and we can try and arrange a place for you to store these belongings. There will be a charge for this.

Questions for your Homestay Family

General

- Can I have friends over to visit?
 - Do you have a house key for me?
 - How do I get to school? Are there buses I need to catch?
 - What is the street address here?
-

Chores

- What chores would you like me to help with?
 - (e.g., make my bed, keep my room tidy, leave the bathroom clean and tidy, set or clear the table for meals, load or unload the dishwasher, empty the rubbish bin, hang my washing on the clothesline)
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Laundry

- How often do you wash clothes?
 - Where should I put my dirty laundry?
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Meal Times

- When are mealtimes?
 - If I am hungry or thirsty, can I help myself to food and drink at any time, or do I need to ask first?
 - What time do I need to be home for dinner during the week and on weekends?
 - Do you want me to make my own breakfast or lunches? Can you show me how?
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Bathroom

- What is the best time for me to use the bathroom—weekday mornings, evenings, or weekends?
 - What should I do with my towels?
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Times and Curfews

- What time do I need to be home on weekdays and weekends?
 - What time do you need me to get up on weekday mornings?
 - How should I contact you if I will be late?
-

Phone / Internet / Computers

- What are the rules about using a computer in your home?
 - What time should I get off the internet at night?
 - What is the Wi-Fi password?
 - Do you have my cell phone number?
 - What is your contact number?
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Ms Ann Halpin | International Homestay Manager
ahalpin@hbhs.school.nz

Ms Tonia Heeps | Director of International Students
theeps@hbhs.school.nz
www.hbhs.school.nz
