

Homestay Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school 9387 6133 or brunswick.sc@education.vic.gov.au

Rationale

Where parents opt for the Department of Education and Training (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 is undertaking an approved academic program. This policy has been developed to meet the requirements of the ESOS National Code 2018 and Student Visa conditions (condition 8532) which require that appropriate arrangements have been made for the accommodation, welfare, and support of students. This policy is designed to be consistent with the IED guidelines. It is a Quality Standard requirement that all schools have a homestay policy in place.

Purpose

Brunswick Secondary College is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Brunswick Secondary College has zero tolerance for child abuse. Brunswick Secondary College is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Every person involved in Brunswick Secondary College has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

The copies of the following policies should be provided to the homestay providers:

- BSC Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy
- BSC Child Safety Policy
- BSC Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy & Procedures
- BSC Child Safety Risk Management

In the case of a critical incident, please contact Karen Harris (Principal) on 0409 336 027.

The purpose of this policy is to

- ensure the safety and wellbeing of international students
- ensure that international students and their families understand their rights and responsibilities under the Homestay Agreement
- ensure that Homestay hosts understand their rights and responsibilities under the Homestay Agreement
- ensure compliance with DET International Student mandate

Homestay Conditions

1. Brunswick Secondary College (BSC) is responsible for the selection, approval, and monitoring of Homestay arrangements, for all students enrolled at BSC, who are not residing with either a parent/s or Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) approved relative or guardian.
2. The homestay accommodation will be provided by a host which may be a family, couple, or single person who is aged 21 years or over.
3. All homestay providers and persons over the age of 18 years residing in the Homestay (including other international students) must have a current Working with Children's Check (WWCC).
4. No more than three International Students can be accommodated in the one Home Stay without the approval of the International Students Program Unit (ISPU).
5. A weekly fee between \$390 and \$500 will be charged. The fee is fixed by the school and will not be changed without approval from the school. This covers expenses associated with the provision of the following homestay services:
 - A suitably furnished (bed, wardrobe, towels, and linen) single room for the student's exclusive use.
 - Three nutritious meals per day seven days per week.

- Cleaning services of common areas.
 - Gas, electricity, heating, and water costs.
 - Use of living areas within the residence.
 - Study facilities, including desk, study light and bookcase.
 - Assistance in orientating the student to the local area including travel to school and use of facilities.
 - Telephone and internet expenses are included in the above-named price.
6. BSC will obtain and retain a bond which is the equivalent of 2 weeks' fees from each student which will be held in trust and returned to the student at the end of homestay arrangement and when the school is satisfied that there is no damage to the property or rent is owing, (after discussing with homestay provider).
 7. During holidays, a holding fee to secure the homestay accommodation may be required to cover the student's absence. This is to be negotiated between the homestay, student and school and may not be over 50% of the total homestay fee.
 8. Cash payments are not acceptable. All homestay payments will be via direct debit into the homestay's bank account.
 9. Students and/or parents are required to reimburse homestay providers for any damage to the property caused by the student, or costs incurred by the student during the time of residence.
 10. If either the student or homestay provider wish to terminate the agreement, they must give BSC at least two weeks' notice. The bond will be retained by the homestay provider should a student leave without giving appropriate notice. If a homestay provider wishes to terminate the homestay agreement, any advance payment for homestay accommodation must be refunded to the student.
 11. BSC establishes and maintains contact with the host families by inviting them to be involved in both formal and informal school events and activities, including:
 - Attendance reviews
 - Performances
 - Sporting events

Homestay providers are strongly encouraged to take an active role in the student's education and well-being whilst in Australia by involving the student in domestic and social activities outside of school hours.

12. In the event of reports of serious allegations by either party the student will be provided with welfare support and moved immediately to emergency accommodation until such time that new accommodation is secured. The ISPU will be notified immediately.
13. Homestay providers assist the college in maintaining the wellbeing of the students in their care but are not responsible for the student's overall welfare. Homestay providers should comply with the BSC Child Safety Policy and notify the school's International Student Coordinator (ISC) if there are any welfare issues concerning the student as soon as the difficulty arises.
14. If a homestay provider or student wants a dispute resolved BSC can implement a Dispute Resolution Procedure.
 - If the incident involves breaches of the visa conditions ISPU and DIPC are notified when welfare arrangements transfer from the college to ISPU.
15. Students will be asked to sign a Homestay Responsibility Agreement on arrival. This will outline the house rules and requirements to which the student must abide by. Student and homestay providers cannot change the homestay arrangements without consultation with the school and through the Homestay Responsibility Agreement.
16. BSC requires all Welfare Option 3 and Home Stay Option 4 students, who are over the age of eighteen years of age to remain in a BSC-approved Homestay for the duration of their approved academic program.
17. If students wish to stay overnight outside of their approved homestay, they must receive permission from the ISC and provide relevant contacts details of the person they wish to stay with.
18. If students wish to stay more than 24 hours outside of their approved homestay, they must receive ISC permission and provide written consent from their parents and homestay provider and documentation of WWCC for anyone over the age of 18 years of age residing in the residency they wish to stay in.
 - If the appropriate action is not taken the ISPC must report the student to ISPU who will report them to DIPC as this is a breach of visa condition 8532.
 - 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 principal and/or ISPC. The ISC must then report it to International Education Division (IED) who will report it to DIBP.
19. The school will monitor progress of homestay arrangements, including twice yearly visits.
20. Homestay providers are required to participated in the annual homestay training organised by the school's ISC.

Homestay arrangements are rewarding experiences for both students and host families. The college is grateful to members of the community for their support to our students during their time with us.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Discussed at staff meetings/briefings as required
- Made available publicly on our school website
- Included in an annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed February 2025

Approved by Principal

Next scheduled review date February 2027

By signing below, I acknowledge that I understand and agree to the above conditions of the BSC Homestay Policy

Homestay provider

Signed _____ Date: _____

Student

Signed _____ Date: _____

School Representative

Signed _____ Date: _____