

**FIRBANK GRAMMAR SCHOOL POLICY FOR:  
Standard 5-Younger Overseas Students Accommodation**

---

Firbank is responsible for the welfare and accommodation of students who have been issued a CAAW letter.

**STUDENTS UNDER 18 STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA MUST HAVE ONE OF THE OPTIONS BELOW IN PLACE**

1. Live with a parent or relative as permitted by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). In this case the School is not required to provide a welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS. The student's family provides proof of the relationship to DHA for the purposes of visa application and the family is fully responsible for the welfare of the child.

*or*

2. Live in Firbank's Boarding House. Younger overseas students must be provided with a welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS to accompany the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). In this instance Firbank becomes fully responsible for the welfare of the student until another School accepts responsibility or the student returns home/back into their parent/guardian's care.

*or*

3. Live in a Home Stay that is approved by Firbank during Boarding House closures. Younger overseas students must be provided with a welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS to accompany the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). In this instance Firbank becomes fully responsible for the welfare of the student until another School accepts responsibility or the student returns home/back into their parent/guardian's care.

It is Firbank's policy to assess the suitability of accommodation arrangements of younger overseas students by:

- visiting the accommodation
- completing accommodation checklists
- conducting student interviews
- conducting student surveys

**STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 13**

In line with VRQA guidelines, Firbank will only accept students under the age of 13 if they are accommodated in the Boarding House or will be living with a parent.

**APPROVAL OF ACCOMMODATION: HOMESTAY OR BOARDING HOUSE**

The following policy will apply to both long-term and short-term accommodation.

For accommodation to be approved by the School, the following must be provided:

- a child safe, comfortable and caring environment

- a private, clean and warm bedroom, work desk, internet access, good healthy food (3 meals a day), laundry facilities and a supportive environment
- a comfortable adult sized bed, study desk or table and chair, adequate lighting for study, and space for the student's clothes and personal belongings
- appropriate heating and cooling
- a nourishing breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days per week, including snacks where appropriate. Meals and snacks must be adequate to the appetites of the students which may be considerable in the case of young adults. It is also expected that some meals will be adjusted to meet the cultural needs and preferences of students.
- access to a shared or private bathroom, with reasonable time allowed for showers

## THE BOARDING HOUSE

The School ensures that the Boarding House provides suitable accommodation for younger overseas students by:

- auditing against the Australian Standards Association (ASA) Standard AS5725:2015 Boarding Standards for Australian Schools and Residences
- placing students in boarding accommodation appropriate to their age and needs
- student interviews conducted by the Head of Boarding
- asking students to complete an annual survey
- conducting visits every 6 months to verify that the accommodation is maintained at a standard appropriate for the student's age and needs

Prior to employment, all Boarding House staff are required to provide:

- current Working with Children (WWC) cards
- proof of personal identity
- references relating to their suitability for working with children
- evidence of any history of work involving children

All Boarding House staff must also read, understand and comply with Firbank's

- Child Protection & Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct

They must complete the Department's Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations online module. Evidence of completion needs to be provided to Firbank.

'Training: Protecting Children': <http://www.elearn.com.au/det/protectingchildren/external/>

All Boarding House staff will be required to attend annual training. See Training Policy for Staff and Community Supporting International Students Policy.

## HOMESTAY HOSTS

For homestay hosts to be approved by the School, they must provide:

- current Working with Children (WWC) cards for all members of the household who are over the age of 18
- proof of personal identity as evidence that they reside in the house
- references relating to their suitability for working with children
- evidence of any history of work involving children

Homestay hosts must also read, understand and comply with Firbank's

- Child Protection & Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct

Homestay hosts must complete the Department's Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations online module. Evidence of completion needs to be provided to Firbank.

'Training: Protecting Children': <http://www.elearn.com.au/det/protectingchildren/external/>

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF FIRBANK

Firbank must:

- have appropriate processes for recruitment and screening of homestay families
- provide the homestay host with appropriate information regarding their responsibilities and emergency contact details for the School
- ensure that there is regular ongoing training of host families and Boarding House staff
- maintain regular contact with host families, students and School staff as required
- have clear processes for implementing and documenting the following:
  - ⇒ Working with Children checks
  - ⇒ Proof of personal identity
  - ⇒ Reference checks
  - ⇒ Evidence of history of working with children
  - ⇒ Bi-annual site visits to check the suitability of accommodation
  - ⇒ Completion of accommodation checklists
  - ⇒ Completion of Protecting Children training
  - ⇒ Signed agreements with homestay providers
  - ⇒ Student homestay surveys
- ensure that the students are given age and culturally appropriate information on:
  - ⇒ who to contact in an emergency situation, including phone numbers of the nominated staff for the School other emergency services (Student Safety Cards)
  - ⇒ how to seek assistance and report any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse
  - ⇒ how to contact the School should the student be unhappy with their accommodation arrangements
- ensure that students that wish to stay away from their homestay overnight provide written permission from their parents to the school and that the School checks the suitability of this accommodation by using the approval of accommodation: homestay or boarding house procedures listed above

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOMESTAY HOST

The homestay host will be expected to:

- provide a safe environment which will offer the student a total experience of living as a member of an Australian family and which encourages positive study habits and an opportunity to use their English regularly in communication with the home stay family members
- be available at home on the student's arrival and remain with the student as long as needed on their first day
- ensure that the student is appropriately supervised at all times throughout the duration of residing in the homestay, including:
  - ⇒ maintaining suitable supervision of students outside of school hours
  - ⇒ monitoring the student's general welfare including the student's social activities



- complete any documentation including home stay guidelines sheet with students within the first week and provide a home orientation which includes use of facilities and any rules or schedules of the household which the student will need to understand
- establish a system of communication which will ensure that the family and the School can trace any student who may go missing
- ensure that students provide written permission from their parents to the school and have the school's endorsement if they wish to stay away from their homestay overnight
- offer help, guidance, support and encouragement with studies, planning leisure activities and adapting to living in Australia
- provide the student with a private, clean and warm bedroom, work desk, internet access, good healthy food (3 meals a day), laundry facilities and a supportive environment
- provide a comfortable adult sized bed, study desk or table and chair, adequate lighting for study, and space for the student's clothes and personal belongings within each home stay bedroom
- provide nourishing breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days per week, including snacks where appropriate
- maintain reasonable expectations for household chores, (many cultures do not expect young adults to do chores within the family)
- respect the students' need for privacy and allow them space to be alone
- liaise with the International Student Co-ordinator regarding any concerns or difficulties
- inform the School if you have any concerns about the student's physical or mental safety regardless of whether this situation originates in the home stay situation
- contact emergency services, such as police or ambulance, in any emergency situation, and contact the school as soon as practical thereafter
- notify Firbank's International Student Co-ordinator of any change of circumstances in the household
- ensure that the maximum number of homestay students is two

### **NOTIFYING FIRBANK**

A host family must notify the International Student Co-ordinator at Firbank at least two weeks in advance, or as soon as practicable, of any change of circumstances, including:

- if the host family proposes to materially change the homestay residence in a way that will affect their ability to meet the homestay residence requirements
- if the host family is temporarily unable to provide accommodation or suitable supervision for periods of holidays or other periods
- the host family needs to change address or contact details
- if the student fails to reside in their approved address at all times or intends to move

### **SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION OF STUDENTS ENROLMENT**

If Firbank suspends or cancels the enrolment of an underage student, it must continue to check the suitability of arrangements for that student until:

- the student is accepted by another registered provider and that provider takes over responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements
- the student leaves Australia
- other suitable arrangements are made that satisfy the Migration Regulations or
- the Registered provider reports that it can no longer approve of the arrangements for the student

### **RECORD KEEPING**



Firbank maintains evidence of compliance with this policy by maintaining records of activities undertaken by the School in accordance with this policy, any written agreements entered into by the School and copies of all CAAW letters.

#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Homestay Host Agreement
- Homestay Accommodation checklist
- International Student Homestay Feedback form
- Child Protection and Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct