

Albany Junior High School

Homestay Information And Guidelines

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Welcome to Albany Junior High School

Thank you for your interest in hosting an international student from Albany Junior High School. Our school prides itself on its highly regarded international student programme and our homestay families are essential to its success.

We are seeking homestay families who can provide a friendly, supportive and caring home environment for our students during their time in Aotearoa New Zealand. We view the homestay experience as an opportunity for students and homestays to share cultures and create memorable experiences together. We want homestays who will care for students as they would their own child or whanau/family member.

We welcome new homestay applications from the school and local community throughout the year. AJHS is fortunate to have local students from many nationalities and is located in a multicultural community enriching the experience of our international students.

Our international students range from 10 to 15 years. Like all young people they need support, not only with the challenge of a new school environment, but also learning English, new customs and adjusting to family life. For most students this is the first time away from family and they can get homesick. However, with patient and caring support students quickly adapt to their new life.

This booklet outlines information on becoming an AJHS homestay and also provides guidelines to assist families when hosting students.

Becoming a Homestay Family

If you are interested in becoming a homestay family, the homestay coordinator will arrange a home visit to check on suitability of your home for hosting, as well as police vetting of all household members over 18 years. These are mandatory under 'The Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2021'. Full details of the Code of Practice can be found on the NZQA website www.nzqa.govt.nz.

A student will not be placed in your care until all vetting has been cleared. The home visit also provides an opportunity to answer any questions you have about hosting.

The homestay coordinator's role is to provide support, not only to students, but also host parents. We encourage open communication between homestays and school to support a student's well-being. The international

team is fortunate to have speakers who provide language support, but also assist with pastoral care and cultural adjustment.

After the initial visit, the homestay coordinator will visit your home twice a year, but will also check in by phone or email in between visits. This is an opportunity to provide feedback about your student and gain any additional support. Our team also regularly checks in with our international students to monitor their experience.

Homestay Responsibilities

Homestay parents need to provide a safe, respectful and friendly living environment and be responsible for a student's day to day care including:

- 3 meals per day and access to snacks (the same as provided to other family members).
- Access to bathroom facilities for bathing and basic toiletries – soap, towel, toothpaste, and shampoo.
- Laundering their clothes or providing access to laundry if requested by the student (with instruction).
- Transporting to/from school – walk, car or bus (school bus fare to be covered by homestay fee).
- Caring for them if they are sick and seeking medical treatment. This may require a homestay parent to provide care during the working day. Please notify AJHS of a student's absence.
- Notifying the international team if your student needs to go to the doctor. Collect all receipts and medical reports for insurance purposes and forward for processing.
- Contact school immediately if your student seems very homesick, depressed or has behavioural concerns.
- Encouraging your student to participate in family activities e.g. chores, family pictures, sports and special family dinners. Special family events may be excluded and temporary care can be requested.
- Setting reasonable age appropriate rules and boundaries. Discuss your expectations - don't assume anything.

- Transporting your student to and from an extracurricular activity once a week. This needs to fit with the family schedule.
- Attending teacher/student interviews and international functions if available to do so.
- Read and respond to school notices, including signing permission slips for school activities and events (contact school if uncertain about giving consent). Please note this does NOT include giving consent for immunisations.

Student Supervision, Health and Safety

Host parents have a duty of care to provide a safe living environment for international students. This includes the following:

- Students under the age of 14 may not be left at home alone or without adequate supervision of an age appropriate person. All students may not be left alone in the home overnight.
- Female students may not be in the care of a male caregiver overnight. Please contact the school to arrange an alternative placement or to discuss the situation further.
- Notify the school if the family plans to go away and your student cannot go. Please allow time for a temporary homestay to be arranged.
- Contact school if your student asks to spend the night with friends or relatives. Homestay parents may agree to students staying overnight, but only if school is satisfied with the standard of care and adult supervision. Contact details should be forwarded to school.
- Ensure students are safely transported to school and other activities. Students can only be driven by an adult holding a full driver licence. They may not be driven by other students.
- If your student is at an evening activity, please ensure they are transported home safely.
- Working smoke alarms are mandatory in a homestay home, including a student's bedroom.
- Teach your student what to do in the event of a fire or other natural disaster.
- Please show your student where basic first aid items are kept.

- Provide a range of nutritious meals and encourage your student to make healthy food choices. Show your student what is available for snacks.

Food can be a source of comfort and adapting to a new diet can be challenging - please be patient. Like all young people, a student may have food preferences and we appreciate consideration of these.

Bedroom and Study Facilities

Students must have their own bedroom, unless a twin share is requested. Please respect a student's private space and ensure other family members are aware of this.

Students are expected to keep their bedroom 'reasonably' tidy and free from rubbish. Please contact the coordinator if your student is not respecting this condition. Other requirements include:

- a bed with warm bedding
- study desk and chair
- reading lamp and adequate lighting for study
- bedroom furniture to store clothes, books and personal items
- adequate heating to maintain a healthy environment
- smoke alarm in student's room

AJHS is a high digital learning environment, and students need a reasonable level of internet access for study. They should also have access for contact with family/friends and for pleasure, but should comply with an agreed limit. Please support your student to enjoy leisure activities away from screen time and ensure devices are switched off at night.

Changes to Homestay Household

- Notify AJHS of any changes to people living in the homestay house, including extended family, flatmates/borders, new students or long term visitors. Police vetting of all people living in a homestay over 18 years applies.
- Advise AJHS immediately if any circumstances may affect police vetting results of any member of the household.
- Most parents of international students do not want other students of the same nationality or of a different gender in the same homestay. Please

- check with school before accepting other homestays that may not comply. Occasionally, we have parents who are happy to accept the above.
- We place a limit of three international students per homestay.

Notice of Termination

- Please give the school at least 14 days prior notice to end a homestay placement.
- AJHS reserves the right to remove a student immediately, without prior notice, in situations where the student is at risk emotionally and physically.
- In cases where the relationship between the homestay and student is problematic, we ask homestay parents to allow for a period of remedy. If the homestay relationship breaks down or in case of emergency we will change homestays as soon as possible.
- AJHS will give 7 days' notice of a student terminating a homestay, but aim to provide more notice if possible.

Homestay Payments

- A homestay fee (\$320) is paid weekly, 1 week in advance to a nominated bank account. Please provide email confirmation of account details.
- If a student is away from a homestay for more than 5 nights (i.e. overseas trip, personal travel), a holding fee of \$10 per day is paid to homestay instead of the above payments.
- Homestay families are encouraged to pick up/drop off students at the airport. Host parents are reimbursed for this support.
- Students must be guided through the check-in and departure gate. If they are travelling as an unaccompanied minor they need to be linked with this service.

Alternatively, a specialised shuttle service will be arranged.

- Homestay parents are responsible for any tax obligations relating to homestay payments.

Students may NOT request their homestay family to

- Pay for their mobile phone or toll calls.
- Provide dietary food unless previously arranged, cook or purchase special food. Your student may like to purchase some familiar food at their own expense.
- Provide accommodation to their family or friends.
- Comply with unreasonable demands – please advise school if this happens.
- Handle money on their behalf. If a student or their parent request this, please contact the school.

Homestay families can expect students to

- Gain permission before going out and provide an address or location of outing, expected time home and contact of another person if going out in a group. We would also expect students to have a working mobile phone and tell their host parents if they are running late.
- Respect curfews. During the week, we recommend students arrive home by 6pm or before dark in winter (unless at a pre-arranged activity).
- Abide by NZ legislation regarding drugs, alcohol, and smoking, and illegal internet use.

Emergency Contacts

For all emergencies please phone – 24/7

09 414 4455

For international student and homestay support during school hours:

Director of International Students

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Homestay Coordinator

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