Westall Secondary College
88-128 Rosebank Avenue, Clayton South, Victoria 3169
(03) 9546 3233
info@westallsc.vic.edu.au
www.westallsc.vic.edu.au
Cricos Provider No. 00861K

Westall Secondary College International Student Homestay Policy

This policy outlines important information about your homestay experience while studying with Westall Secondary College. It is based on the guidelines set by the Department of Education (DE) and the Australian Government to ensure your safety and wellbeing. Please read this carefully and don't hesitate to ask any questions.

1. Welfare Accommodation Options

There are different types of welfare options available, which depend on your circumstances:

- **Option 1- Parent or Legal Guardian:** You live with a parent or legal guardian. These guardians must have a visa for the duration of your enrolment or until you turn 18.
- **Option 2- DHA Approved Relative:** You live with a relative that is approved by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). The relative's visa must be valid for the duration of the student's enrolment, or until they turn 18.
- **Option 3- Parent Nominated Homestay:** Your parents nominate a homestay for you which has been approved by Westall Secondary College.
- **Option 4- School Arranged Homestay:** Westall Secondary College arranges a homestay for you.
- For students aged 18 or over, **independent living** is NOT an automatic and must be applied through DE process. Students who have been placed at academic risk or on a student contract will not be approved for independent living.

2. Introduction to Homestay (Option 3 and Option 4)

- Homestay is a type of accommodation where you live with a local family who will provide you with accommodation, meals, facilities, and utilities for a fee.
- For Option 3 and 4 students, The DE International Education Division (IED) is responsible for your welfare at all times, including outside of school hours. Westall Secondary College provides you with a guardianship.
- Students who begin their enrolment at Westall Secondary College under Option 4 (School Arranged Homestay) must remain under this arrangement for a minimum of six months before requesting to change to another welfare option, unless exceptional circumstances are approved by the school and the Department of Education.

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3. Homestay Behavior Expectations

To ensure a positive homestay experience, please remember the following:

- **House Rules:** You must follow all house rules set by your host family specified in Homestay Agreement.
- **Drop-off/Pick-up:** If you require transport, negotiate rates for drop-off and pick-up with your homestay.
- **Curfew:** You must be home by a certain time each day—**straight after school on weekdays, and before dark on weekends and during school holidays.**
- **Damages:** You are responsible for any damage you cause.
- **Safety:** You must communicate with your homestay family if you are running late or not coming home for a meal.
- **Medical absences:** Medical absences must be reported and verified by the Homestay. Student communication/notification is not accepted/sufficient. Homestay has a duty of care to ensure you receive appropriate medical assistance when unwell. Without Homestay verification, the absence will not be approved and will be recorded as truancy.

4. Travel and Safety

- **Travel Approval:** All travel must be approved by your parents/legal guardian and Westall Secondary College. You must provide details of your travel to your Homestay Provider.
    - **Within Australia Travel:** You can travel within Australia under the following circumstances: With your homestay family; on a commercial tour or academic program with appropriate supervision; in the care of a direct family member who is over 21 years of age; to a sporting, academic, or club camp/tour.
    - **Travel To and From Australia:** You can only travel outside of Australia into the care of a parent, legal guardian, or direct family member over 21 years of age who has been approved by your parent.
        - Students must submit a Travel Request at least 4 weeks prior to the proposed travel, with complete travel arrangements and contact details provided to the school and Homestay Provider.
        - No student or family travel request will be approved for any reason if the travel results in the student leaving before the final scheduled day of a school term or returning after the first scheduled day of the following term.

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- Travel requests will not be approved on the last scheduled day of any school term. This applies to all students and families and includes requests based on flight availability, cost, family commitments or other circumstances.
- Students are expected to remain enrolled and attend school for the full duration of each school calendar year, including the final scheduled day.
- Where a student or family has additional, exceptional or compassionate circumstances that require an extended absence from school, the student/family may apply for a Temporary Suspension of Enrolment. Any such application will be considered separately in accordance with the school's enrolment requirements and relevant international student policies.
- Approval of a Temporary Suspension of Enrolment is not automatic and must be granted prior to the student making travel arrangements.
- The school reserves the right to approve or reject any Travel Request or application for Temporary Suspension of Enrolment.

- **Overnight Stays:** For overnight stays outside of your homestay, you must have legal guardian's written consent, complete a form at least 7 days prior to request and notify your homestay.
- **Safety:**
  - Keep your school and homestay informed of your whereabouts.
  - If you have any concerns, disputes, or critical incidents, contact Westall Secondary College immediately.

5. Contact Persons

- **School Contacts:**
  - **Ms. Lyndal YARDAS** is the Acting Assistant Principal.
  - **Ms. Summer BAO** is the International Coordinator.
  - **Mrs. Huyen NGUYEN** is the ISP Student Support contact.
  - **Mrs. Khampheuy MANIPHET** is the ISP Homestay Support contact.
  - **Miss Niza YONG** is also ISP Student Support.

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- **Safety and Homestay Issues:** The people above can assist you with safety and homestay concerns.

6. Complaints and Conflict Resolution

- **Communication:** If you have any issues or concerns with your homestay, it's important to try to communicate with your host family first.
- **Homestay Support:** If you cannot resolve the issue with your host family, contact Ms. Khampheuy MANIPHET for assistance.
- **Option 4 Changing Homestay Options:**
    - If issues with your current homestay cannot be resolved, the school will arrange a new homestay for you. However, you may not always be able to choose the new placement.
    - You are permitted to change homestays only **once**.
    - If you remain unsatisfied after the move, you may explore alternative welfare arrangements.
    - Westall Secondary College's priority is to ensure you feel safe and supported in your living environment while maintaining fairness and consistency in the homestay program.

7. Homestay Fees

- The weekly rate for homestay accommodation is **$360**. This includes the cost of all services such as internet.
- During Autumn, Winter, and Spring holidays, a **$100/week** holding fee is charged.
- During the Summer holiday, a **$70/week** holding fee is charged, capped at **$500**.
- Once Travel Request has been confirmed, any subsequent changes that affect holding fees must be negotiated directly with the Homestay. The Homestay may agree to or decline the requested change, including any request for a refund or adjustment of holding fees.

8. School Responsibilities

- The school will provide you with information, support, and training to ensure your homestay is suitable.
- The school will conduct a site visit check of your homestay before you arrive, and every six months.

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- All homestay providers and those frequently residing at the homestay over 18 years of age must have a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC).
- Westall Secondary College will maintain up-to-date records of your contact and accommodation details.
- Westall Secondary College will notify the DE (IED) if there are any concerns regarding your welfare.
- Westall Secondary College will assist you with travel arrangements and ensure they are in line with DE (IED) guidelines.
- Westall Secondary College has the right to terminate your homestay if your homestay provider is found to be unsuitable.

9. Year 12 Students

- If you are a Year 12 student in a school-arranged homestay, the school maintains a duty of care to you and your welfare until the end date on your Confirmation of Enrolment (COE).
- Changes to your welfare arrangements must be approved by the school, even after your classes have finished, unless you are returning home.
- If you have finished your studies and are marked as 'left program' you should only be removed from the homestay at that point.
- International students over 18 have the option to live independently if the school and principal agree to it and parental consent is given. Before the process is complete, you must not leave your homestay.

10. Contact Information

- **Westall Secondary College**
  - Address: 88-128 Rosebank Avenue, Clayton South, VIC 3169.
  - Phone: (03) 9546 3233.
  - Email: westall.sc@education.vic.gov.au.
- **DE International Education Division (IED)**
  - Email: international.school.support@education.vic.gov.au.
  - Phone: +61 3 7022 1000.