

DE INTERNATIONAL

NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HOMESTAY REQUIREMENTS

A positive homestay experience provides a great opportunity for students to learn about the Australian culture and improve their English. It is also an essential part of the International Student Program to ensure students are well supported in a safe and friendly living environment.

The NSW Department of Education sets homestay requirements to ensure the accommodation and living arrangements are of high quality and are appropriate for international students.

The department's requirements are aligned with the [Australian Government Schools International \(AGSI\) Homestay Standards](#).



Homestay Accommodation Requirements

To **ensure students live in safe and secure environments**, each homestay residence must meet the following requirements:

- A safe and secure bedroom is provided for the student's sole use, with storage space for clothes, personal items and study materials, and facilities including a bed, desk, chair and adequate lighting for study purposes
- No more than 3 international students of any age may stay in the home at the same time
- The home must be clean, with appropriate furnishings suitable for a family and students
- Students must be given access to:
 - a shared or private bathroom, with reasonable time allowed for showers
 - the kitchen, living areas, laundry facilities and shared areas of the home
 - heating in winter and cooling in summer, if required
- All household facilities and appliances must comply with government regulations regarding safety standards
- Students must be given keys and any passcodes required to have free access to the homestay residence.

Homestay Carer Responsibilities

In **providing care and support to students** each homestay family must:

- Provide photos of the family and home in a welcome letter sent by the homestay provider to students prior to their arrival
- Inform the homestay provider that the student has arrived safely at the host family home
- Welcome the student into the home and include the student in family activities. The family must also ensure the student is treated in exactly the same manner as all other members of the family regarding access to food, the provision of three meals per day, including food for making lunch
- Ensure the student is cared for and supervised by the homestay carer at all times while in residence, including holiday periods if the student does not return to their home country. If the carer must travel, the carer will notify the homestay provider and DE International so that temporary, alternative arrangements can be arranged
- Actively care for the student's wellbeing and assist the student to seek any necessary medical attention and ensure proper medical certification is obtained. In case of absence



from school due to illness ensure the medical certificates are provided to the school

- Familiarise the student with the local area including the location of shops, banks, medical centres / hospitals and local transport, specifically transport to and from school
- Ensure the student is aware of emergency numbers including 000, location of police stations and Australian laws that relate to under 18 year olds
- Inform the parents and/or homestay provider in the event of any problems or issues, discuss solutions and act promptly on their advice

To **assist schools with supporting the educational needs of students**, each homestay family must:

- Attend school meetings including enrolment interviews, parent/teacher interviews, subject selection meetings and other school meetings deemed necessary by the Principal
- Assist the student to understand school rules, expectations and visa requirements and abide by them
- Ensure that the student attends regularly and punctually and advise the school in writing of any student absences or lateness with an explanation
- Provide in writing requests for short leave to the school for the student to attend medical/dental appointments or other leave, specifying the dates and times of the absence
- In case of accident/serious illness or medical

emergency, contact immediately the homestay provider, school and the parents, if possible

- Liaise with the school concerning the student's behaviour, or issues affecting the student's course progress

In the event of any changes to living arrangements, the homestay family must:

- Notify the homestay provider and the school of any intended changes to the address or living arrangements prior to those changes occurring or as soon as practicable. This notification must be in writing and provide full details of the new arrangements, and must comply with the department's and Department of Home Affairs' requirements
- Provide two weeks' notice to the homestay provider if the carer can no longer act as homestay carer for the student
- Notify the homestay provider and the school immediately if the student intends to move from the homestay family.

Homestay Provider Requirements

The department works with 4 homestay providers that source appropriate homestays for younger students. **The department sets strict requirements that each provider must meet**, including:

- Ensuring that all adults residing at any homestay must have current police clearances for working with children
- Conducting regular visits and assessments of each homestay, with access to all areas of the homestay premises for the purposes of checking compliance with legislation and the homestay accommodation requirements set by the department
- Ensuring homestay families have appropriate insurance policy cover for students residing in their home
- Ensuring there is regular training of homestay families, particularly in relation to hosting younger students under 18 years
- Ensuring there is a 24 hour emergency contact number that is known to students, homestay family and the education provider
- Maintaining regular contact with homestay families, students, DE International and school staff, as required.