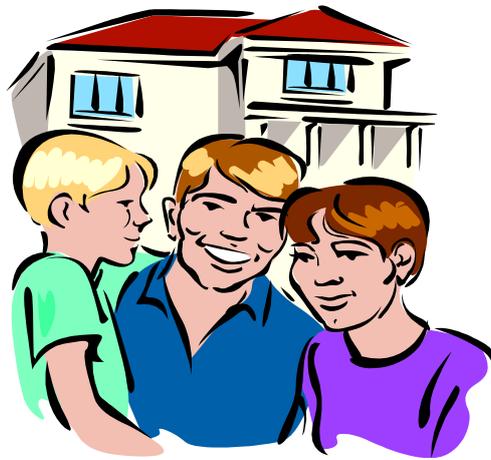


# Fiordland College Handbook



**For Homestay  
Families**



# FIORDLAND COLLEGE

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NEW ZEALAND

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Principal  
Mrs Lynlee Smith

International Student Director  
Mrs Marie Galland

*Fiordland College has agreed to observe and be bound by the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students published by the Minister of Education.*

*Copies of the Code are available on request from this institution or from the New Zealand Ministry of Education website at <http://www.minedu.govt.nz>.*

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# FIRST THINGS FIRST

## INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared for you – homestay families – who have expressed the desire to host an international student studying under our International Student Programme.

We suggest you read it through now, discuss it with the International Student Director (Marie Galland) and then keep it for reference.

The purpose of the handbook is to be a general guide and to help you with the questions that may come up most frequently. We suggest you discuss the handbook (where appropriate) with all members of the family so that they can all help make the new student feel at home, and any questions they might have we can attempt to answer.

We believe that having international students can be an extremely rewarding experience for the host family. However, some pre-thinking about the situation can help prevent some problems arising and smooth the transition, both for yourselves and your students.

The handbook contains some obvious and some not so obvious thoughts and suggestions that will make the homestay experience an enjoyable and pleasant one for both parties.

First of all, a little bit about us ...

## FIORDLAND COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME CONTACTS

<b>School Address</b>	Fiordland College Howden St P O Box 23 TE ANAU 9640
<b>Phone</b>	(03) 249 7819
<b>Fax</b>	(03) 249 7810
<b>Email</b>	admin@fiordlandcollege.school.nz
<b>Principal</b>	Ms Lynlee Smith
<b>International Student Director</b>	Mrs Marie Galland Home Phone (03) 249 5832
<b>International Student Tutor</b>	

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT DIRECTOR**

Marie Galland is the International Student Director at Fiordland College. She may be reached at the College or, alternatively, her home telephone number is (03) 249 5832.

Marie is actively involved in helping to market the international programme and helps with course information and documentation prior to students' arrival.

While they are studying Marie is the person they will go to with any problems, big or small. Marie is also course co-ordinator for these students. She oversees the subject ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and will be one of their tutors. Mrs Lindsay King is also a tutor in this area.

Marie will help the students with any problems relating to their study. If you have questions regarding the course, please contact her.

Marie also oversees and co-ordinates the homestay programme. She matches students to families and organises the payment of money to homestay families. If you, or your students, have any queries or concerns regarding the homestay, Marie will be able to help you. She will also arrange occasional get-togethers and outings for the students as a group.

### **PERSONAL NOTE**

*It is recognised that there are many differences in the customs and culture of different countries and, because of this, it can often be difficult for young students who are visiting another country to settle in and feel at home.*

*As we all wish to make the students' stay in Te Anau a happy and enjoyable experience, it is hoped that this handbook will answer some of the questions and concerns that homestay families may have about hosting an international student.*

*I am happy and available to be your chief source of help and advice at any time throughout the year.*

*Marie Galland  
International Student Director*

## **WHAT IS EXPECTED OF HOMESTAY PARENTS?**

Here is a useful summary of the key requirements of being a homestay parent.

- Provide 3 meals a day (including any takeaways or meals out at the parents' expense)
- Care for the student as you would your own child
- Provide a warm, comfortable single room with study facilities
- Encourage the student to participate in the family's activities (eg chores, family photos, sports and family holidays)
- Set reasonable rules
- Attend parent evenings and international functions
- Do not provide or purchase alcohol for students
- Set reasonable curfew at weekends and time to be home after school
- Discuss your rules and expectations with the student and do not assume anything
- Contact the College immediately if there are any serious breaches of the College's rules or health and safety issues (eg drink, drugs, sex)
- Advise the College in the morning if the student is ill and unable to attend school
- Arrange medical attention for the student at the Medical Centre if necessary
- In the case of a medical emergency involving the international student, obtain medical assistance immediately and then liaise with the International Student Director to attempt to reach the student's parents

A copy of the Student Handbook which is given to the student is enclosed, along with a copy of the standard Tuition Agreement signed by students. This will give you an idea of the expectations placed on the students.

## **FIRST DAYS**

Your student may arrive exhausted or relatively fresh. If your student has come direct from Asia there will be new customs and ideas to come to grips with, not only in the community but in your family.

During the first few weeks students may have a hard, tiring job of learning about differences and trying to “fit into” a new way of life, as well as embarking on a course of study. Your student will need your co-operation and sympathetic help with this.

Our students may be quite demanding during this settling in period. However it will be important for you to have a friendly, frank discussion about how your household is run and any “house rules” which apply to everyone in the household. Please do not take anything for granted – your student will need to be **TOLD** everything:

- Laundry arrangements, when and how often it is convenient to bath or shower, where house keys are kept and so on.

Some differences which may be immediately apparent are:

- (1) Their table manners may be different.
- (2) Family relationships may be different.
- (3) Personal cleanliness may be different (eg habits about taking baths, shampoos, changing underwear etc)
- (4) They may experience difficulty adjusting to New Zealand food and perhaps eating meals at a different time to what they are accustomed to.
- (5) They may not drink tea or coffee, may prefer milk or juice, and may not be accustomed to eating potatoes most days.
- (6) Their religious practices may not allow them to eat certain foods and they may not be accustomed to seeing alcohol being consumed by adults.

## **PREPARATION**

Your student needs their own bedroom, with wardrobe, chest of drawers, desk, lamp, chair, heater, mirror and all bedding and towels.

## **LENGTH OF STAY**

The length of stay will vary from student to student and homestay to homestay.

We would prefer to place students for at least one school term. Arrangements will either be made for the student to go elsewhere or, if the situation suits both parties, the homestay could continue for the full year.

However, on occasion we need homestays for holiday periods and sometimes for emergencies. It is good to know that we have extra places available and that there is some flexibility.

If you are not given a student immediately, this will be because of a lack of students available for placement at the time, or matching students to potential homestays indicates they should be placed elsewhere. It is **not** due to unsuitability on your part. Be patient, the right student for you will come along sooner or later.

## **INITIAL WELCOME**

Your student will, if possible, be met in Invercargill by Marie Galland.

She will bring the student to you and introduce him/her to your whole family (if that is possible). She will be available, and she will make a point over the next few days, to keep in contact with you. She will also arrange an orientation programme for your student at school.

## RESPONSIBILITY

Your student will be told that, while out of school hours, he/she is under your control and is your responsibility, just like a child of your own.

Within the school or during school hours, the International Student Director will assume overall responsibility for your student.

## SETTLING IN

This is a process where trust and respect for each other is built. Because of culture shock and initial tiredness and shyness, this may take some time to establish.

**Don't worry!** Be relaxed, friendly and give your student the necessary time to adjust.

**Remember** Your student will be naturally reserved and shy at first.

## IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Your student will have important documents, eg passport. Offer to keep it with your other documents (eg in a filing cabinet) or else suggest to your student that they give the documents to the International Student Director, for storage in the school safe.

## CLOTHING

Students from Asian countries often do not have adequate clothes for our cold weather. When they do wear heavier clothing they may be irritated by the weight.

We recommend students be encouraged to purchase thermal underwear as it is both light and warm. They may ask you for advice about clothing and ask for help on a shopping expedition.

## MONEY

Our students will probably be responsible for their own money. However, they may require help to open a bank account on arrival and may come to you with questions about our banking system.

You may need to remind your student not to allow funds to get too close to running out because it can take some time to receive money from overseas.

You should suggest to your student that a lot of money should not be carried or kept at your home. Banking arrangements can be made with the International Student Director who will help the student organise the homestay allowance.

Although our Student Handbook lists the costs of many items, and the International Director is available to help students, you will be in the "front line" and may have to answer numerous questions about costs, transport, routes, entertainment – you name it! Most certainly, you will be surprised at how your knowledge of your local community will grow!

## SHOPPING

Your student will need to either ask you to help or have access to shopping regularly for their school and personal needs.

The International Director will also help them to find their way about town and get used to buying.

## LETTING OFF STEAM

Almost 24 hours a day your student will be encountering new customs and will be extra-sensitive to what is said. Outside the home people may make unthinking remarks which may hurt them. Let your student “blow off steam” to you.

Sometimes students may make unfavourable comparisons between New Zealand and their home country. This needs to be handled with understanding. Try to remain objective and not become angry. Encourage them to be open and honest with you.

## FOOD

You may be certain our diet, which includes so many dairy products and meat, will be very different to the student’s diet at home. Rice forms the basis of diet in most Asian countries. Sometimes students are very hungry at first. This will be due to the elimination of rice from their diet. The situation will come right in due course but be prepared for what seems to be a voracious appetite.

Be prepared for your students to dislike some foods. It is often a good idea to serve a little at first. Let them know they can leave food on the plate without offending you. Try and give them rice at least every second day, initially.

Asian students often have difficulty coping with the smell of meat cooking, but experience has shown that in time they become used to it. However, in the early days, do not be surprised if they cannot bear to be around when meat is cooking.

Your student’s religious practices may not allow them to eat certain foods and they may not be accustomed to seeing adults consuming alcohol.

Ice cream soon becomes a firm favourite! Your student may even like to cook for you on occasion!

## LANGUAGE

Although students will have a studied English, they will not be confident with conversational English – after all, this is the main reason they are here! They will also not be aware of New Zealand expressions and colloquialisms. A single word or phrase may mean one thing to the student and another to you and misunderstandings may be traceable to this.

On top of this, students will be speaking a language they will not be “thinking” in. If the student has learned any English at school, it is likely to be “American” English, whereas we tend to speak “English” English.

All members of the family should speak slowly and repeat things until they are understood. Speak more slowly than normal, but try not to raise your voice (something many people find themselves doing unconsciously). Watch for signs that students are “lost” and encourage them to stop and interrupt you. Through conversations students learn to speak and understand, thus gaining confidence.

When students are struggling to understand a foreign language they can become very tired. It is a constant strain for them to try and keep up with what is being said. They have just spent a day in the classroom where they will only be allowed to speak English, even if they share the class with someone else of their nationality. Do not be concerned if students often go to their rooms alone – this is a time when they can have a break from the concentration needed to try and follow a conversation.

Always remember to **SMILE** – a smile makes friends and surmounts barriers.

### THE WORD YES

Most Japanese students are reluctant to say “no”. This is regarded as being rude. You may need to listen carefully to the way they say “yes”, to see if that is what they really mean.

Also avoid the use of the “double negative”. For example, “You don’t want to watch TV do you?” is better put as “Do you want to watch TV?”

# CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

## CULTURE SHOCK

Everyone, young or old, can suffer from culture shock. Culture shock is a normal and natural reaction when people are required to function in a different society before they have accepted all the familiar routines as their own.

Changes in language, study, food, home life and climate all combine to require a major level of adjustment. This is a fairly predictable cycle of adjustment, and it is important you should be aware of it. Each student is different and may not experience all of these stages in the same order.

1. "Everything is wonderful" stage. On arrival, everything is new, exciting and interesting.
2. "Everything is awful" stage. Students become accustomed to their new life and may start criticising things that only weeks ago were "great".
3. "Everything is OK" stage. Things aren't so bad after all and the trend begins to reverse. Suddenly situations are not so depressing and students find things interesting again.
4. The final stage is achieved when students feel "at home" in our society. This may never happen for some students but many do achieve this level.

## FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Someone new coming into any home alters the dynamics of the family. Each member of your family will have to adjust to the student and for some, this may take considerable effort and thought.

If you have young children you may find they feel "left out" in the early days when your student will require a lot of your attention. You may need to explain to your children how difficult it is for someone to come to a new country with new people to meet and new customs to learn.

Some families with young children find the student and the children "bond" very quickly. While students love the children they sometimes find it difficult to ask the children to leave them alone for study or time out. You may need to observe carefully and have a quiet word with your children if you think this is needed.

## HOME SICKNESS

After reading about cultural shock it is obvious that most students, initially anyway, will suffer from some degree of home sickness. Be sensitive and supportive at this time, however, also speak positively to them and reassure them that this is a natural thing, it will gradually pass and there are exciting things for them to look forward to.

You may notice at this time that your student is noticeably withdrawn. They will find it all a bit of a strain; 24 hours a day of English with no escape at hand.

Try to ensure they do not get over-tired and give them space and time on their own.

Respect their need to have their room as a private sanctuary and make sure family members knock before entering. Children in the family will probably be of great help at these times, but be aware that the constant demands of younger children are kept reasonable.

Remember too that most students come from a culture where they are ultra polite to survive in big urban centres. For instance, they are not used to "kidding" and teasing or being placed in a position to look ridiculous or second best. Such embarrassment can mean to them "loss of face" and it is very difficult for them to forget such embarrassment. This loss of face characteristic may mean the student is reticent and fearful of making a mistake. Patience and reassurance will be required.

## **SLEEPING**

Remember, your student may find it cold in New Zealand and appreciate the use of an electric blanket. Do remember to tell them not to leave it on while sleeping.

Demonstrate to your student how to make his/her bed and when to change the sheets, if that is expected.

## **STUDY**

Your student will need a private and comfortable environment in which to study and will also at times require the use of a heater, or heating in their bedroom.

You may find they study hard and for long hours. This is what they are used to and as long as it doesn't interfere with other interests it is important they can do this.

## **BODY CONTACT**

Some students are not used to, and are not very keen on body contact. In countries such as Japan, displays of affection, even between a married couple, are seldom seen by children or in public.

The head is very sacred in most Asian cultures. Do not touch Japanese on the head or ruffle up their hair.

## **NOSE BLOWING**

Japanese consider it is very rude to blow their noses in public. It is even worse to use a fabric handkerchief and put it into the pocket. Have some tissues available.

Students will usually clear out their noses in private in the bathroom and you will need to show them where to get rid of the tissues. If your student catches a cold and is unable to blow their nose in private, they will sit politely and sniff. You will probably not be able to do much about this, as your nose blowing is as abhorrent to them as sniffing is to us.

It is a good idea to discuss the differences in habits and customs and nose blowing is a good topic to start with so students are aware of this custom straight away.

## **PRECEDENCE**

In some Asian societies eg Japan, males appear to take precedence over females. This is largely due to the fact that the roles of men and women differ to a greater extent than in New Zealand.

You may find you need to, on occasion, explain or instruct your male student in this area. However, you will find they will try hard to understand, as it is essential to them that they retain their polite behaviour.

## **POLITENESS**

It is a virtue in Asian countries to be polite. They like to show respect to seniors and will particularly avoid making any objection to their elders. This can cause misunderstanding.

Please encourage your student to say what they think and feel and to ask questions. Explain that you will not think badly of them if they criticise or question something. This will help them improve their English as well as help them with the Western way of thinking - and, of course, will help develop mutual understanding.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

### **HOUSEHOLD DUTIES**

We encourage students to help in the house as part of experiencing life with a New Zealand family and as an aid to learning conversation skills. However, students may feel, as board-paying guests, it is inappropriate to help around the house.

While this must be respected, you can expect students to keep their own room tidy, and gradually encourage them to help and fit in the same as other family members. Demonstration by example will convey the custom in your home. Contact the International Student Director if you require advice in this area.

### **RELIGION**

Religion is personal and it goes without saying that you should respect your student's religious beliefs and the student will respect yours. Students may make special arrangements to observe religion in everyday life and this may include dietary restrictions.

Some recognition by your family of particular religious holidays will be appreciated by your student.

### **SMOKING, DRINKING, DRUGS**

Through the Student Handbook and the contract documentation, your student will know that smoking, alcohol and non-prescription drugs are strictly forbidden.

### **SOCIAL LIFE**

Please encourage your student to mix widely, enjoy outings and to feel free to invite a friend around or ask your permission to go to a friend's place.

### **MEDICAL / DENTAL CARE**

Your student has Medical Insurance and will have filled out a medical form with all necessary information, which may be left at the Te Anau Medical Centre.

Please arrange medical attention for the student at the Medical Centre if necessary. In the case of a medical emergency, obtain medical assistance immediately and then liaise urgently with the International Student Director in an attempt to reach the student's parents so that appropriate information can be passed on to the student's family.

### **TELEPHONE**

Your student will be aware that he/she has to pay you for any toll calls made from your telephone and internet usage. However, we recommend that you go through the rules and procedures with your student early in their stay with you.

### **PETS**

Many students will not be familiar with pets in our houses.

Please ensure that, if they are not fond of animals, they will not be unnecessarily bothered by them. On the other hand of course, they may love them.

# **PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS**

## **BATHING AND SHOWERING**

Bathing and showering may also need to be taught. This will require the most painstaking demonstration. Normal bathing (in Japan) involves standing outside the bath and ladling the water over themselves - resulting in a very wet bathroom floor!

Most students will know how to take a bath or shower in western style, but because of their bathing habits they often use a lot of hot water. They will try their best to save the water.

Because some students will wonder why there are two taps, you will have to explain the hot water system, and that the water is normally too hot to be used without cold water as well.

In Japan the hot water system usually operates on a gas califont "instant" hot water system and you may find that the student has taken all your hot water and it has gone unused down the plughole. Explain that it is necessary to conserve hot water because it is expensive and you only have a limited quantity in a cylinder.

Explain too, when you would prefer them to have a bath/shower so it fits in with the needs of the rest of the homestay family.

## **TOILET**

Most Asian students will have used Western style toilets. Male students may need to be instructed to raise the seat when urinating. One way around this is to instruct all the other members of the family to make sure that the seat is raised when they leave the toilet.

It will also be necessary to talk to the female students about arrangements for their needs at the time of their periods. Most will not use tampons at all.

## **LAUNDRY**

Please explain to your student your family arrangements here - where and when to put laundry out etc.

## **PERSONAL NEEDS FOR GIRLS**

Please explain and show your student the appropriate arrangements for disposal of sanitary napkins. Please supply them with a disposal bag for their private use.

## **FAMILY RULES**

Please explain family/house rules to your student carefully. Explain that you are responsible for them out of school hours and that you need to know of their whereabouts at all times.

It is expected that your student will normally be accompanied by another student or a homestay family member when they go anywhere.

## A FINAL WORD

Students have been placed with homestays on paper only and allowance must always be made for the "human factor".

As difficulties arise it is preferable they are worked through with the student and family. Marie Galland (International Director) is available to help should you feel this is required.

Deeper misunderstandings and tensions can arise which sometimes cannot be worked through and in such cases the only solution is to change the student to a different home.

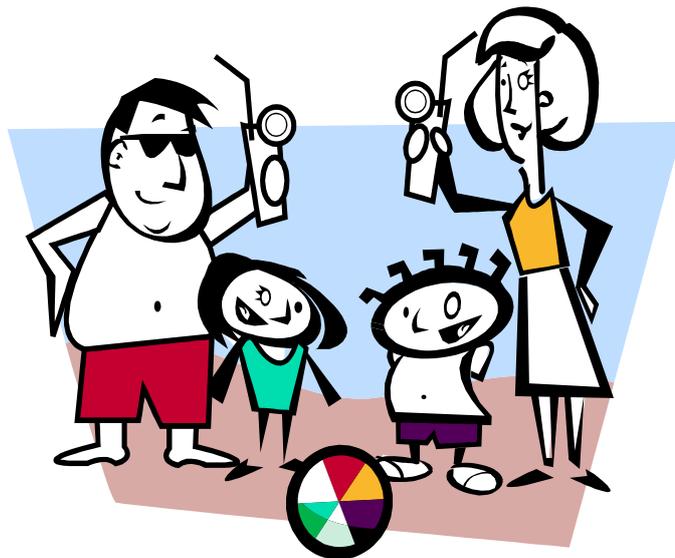
We send our good wishes to you and your student for a rewarding time together.

Please do not forget that we will be pleased to answer or discuss any questions that might arise.

Marie will be arranging an on-going support programme for you and contact with other homestay hosts, with occasional social times together.

Hosting a student will be an interesting and enjoyable experience. Remember that so much of our everyday lifestyle is completely new to your student. Remember too, each student is different, even two students from the same country.

What is written above is a guide only - do not be surprised if what is written does not apply to your student.



Fiordland College wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Pam Hulls (Homestay Co-ordinator, Southland Polytechnic) and Mt. Aspiring College in the preparation of this handbook.