



**A.M.D.G**

# **HOST FAMILY GUIDEBOOK**

## **CHARTER MISSION STATEMENT**

Sacred Heart College provides a Catholic education that encourages each student to aim for excellence and to pursue her full potential.

## **HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE**

Sacred Heart College was established by the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions in 1912 and was the first secondary school to be opened in the Hutt Valley. It was originally sited in High Street on the property known as Margaret Street. In 1957 the school shifted to the existing site in Laings Road. In May 1980 it became the first Catholic secondary school to be integrated.

Sacred Heart offers an education with a special Catholic character, and seeks, through the general school programme and in its religious instruction and observances, to exercise the right to live and teach the values of Jesus Christ as expressed in the Catholic Church. These values permeate the total daily life of the school, and involve teachers, students and parents. The whole reason for the College's existence is that it aims to prepare young women not only for this life but for the next. It is hoped that in the Catholic atmosphere of the College the individual girl will become the Christian woman she is capable of being, and the Virtue and Knowledge represented by the V.K. on the College monogram will become an integral part of each student's life.

**Chairperson of Trust Board: ANEEL ANTHONY**  
**Chairperson of Board of Trustees: TONY LENTON**  
**Principal: LISL PRENDERGAST**

# IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Sacred Heart College is available at all times to provide guidance and support. The contact number for the main office is:

Telephone: (04) 566 1089

Fax: (04) 587 1776

But in the first instance please contact the International Student Manager, Sarah Knowles

Mobile: 021 025 05224

Email: [knowless@sacredheartcollege.school.nz](mailto:knowless@sacredheartcollege.school.nz)

This number will be answered by the International Student Manager 24 hours per day. If there is no reply to the number, leave a message and someone will call you back as soon as possible.

Keep the emergency number in a safe place e.g. your mobile phone.

# HOST FAMILY OPPORTUNITIES

Being a host family provides the opportunity to:

- Learn about another culture
- Encourage your family to learn about another language and/or culture together
- Experience an exchange before sending your daughter on exchange
- Develop lifelong friendships with another family overseas
- Give your children the other sister they have always wanted
- Help your family to see different ways of living and thinking through the “new eyes” of your host student
- Help your children better understand the increasing global nature of life in the modern world
- Give a young person a wonderful opportunity to learn about New Zealand and its people
- Understand how people overcome the difficulties of cultural differences when living or working overseas
- Help your family members to develop greater tolerance, flexibility and capacity to cope with change-valued qualities in the contemporary workplace
- Enrich your family life through a special relationship with your international host student

Learning to live comfortably with a New Zealand family will involve sharing the pleasures, the interests, the chores and the tasks experienced by all families. This also means that the exchange student takes on the responsibilities of a family member and enjoys the privileges of belonging to a family.

# WHAT DO HOST FAMILIES NEED TO PROVIDE?

The student must have:

- their own bedroom equipped with a table or desk and reading light for study purposes
- three meals a day (including a packed lunch or equivalent during the school week)
- Adequate heating and lighting
- Laundry facilities (some may wish to do their own laundry-others will fit into general household laundry arrangements)

The host family must also:

- Escort the student to school on their first day and organise a transport plan to and from school each day.
- Contact the school before 8.30am if the student will not be attending because of illness.
- Notify the school in cases of accident or serious illness.
- Notify the school if there are any changes or additions to the household.
- Notify the school immediately if there are any problems with the student e.g. medical condition, misconduct.
- Notify the school immediately if the student seems very homesick or depressed.
- Not permit the student to drive a vehicle under any circumstances.
- Give at least three weeks' notice in writing to both the student and the Homestay Coordinator before terminating any homestay arrangement.

# **WHAT IS THE WEEKLY HOMESTAY PAYMENT AND HOW ARE PAYMENTS MADE?**

Host families need to provide the International Student Manager with their bank account details.

Payments are usually made fortnightly in arrears usually on a Monday directly into your bank account. As at July 2017, weekly payments were \$255 per week.

# THE FIRST FEW DAYS

- Make them feel welcome, show them their room and around the house
- Introduce them to all family members. Check the pronunciation of their name carefully and be sure that the student knows what to address you as (i.e. mum/dad or first names)
- Sit down with them and go over house rules
- Go over meal times/shower times/bedtimes
- Give them a local map
- Explain to them how they will get to school
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- Show them the local area, train station / bus station / shopping centre
- Explain the laundry arrangements
- Discuss the rules regarding the use of the telephone and/or internet
- Discuss with them the household chores you would like them to be responsible for

# WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS A HOST FAMILY MAY ENCOUNTER?

- Homesickness - this is very common particularly at the beginning and during the winter when it is cold. Communication is vital.
- Tiredness - some international students do not go to bed until very late in their home country. Explain to them that getting enough sleep is critical for their health and well-being.
- Not keeping house rules. If the house rules are consistently broken, speak to the International Student Manager. Sometimes it can simply be a matter of miscommunication between the family and student. It is important to go over house rules when the student first arrives to ensure that there are no misunderstandings.
- Speaking on the phone too much or late at night
- Appearing to be arrogant – the student may just be shy
- Using the Internet too much
- Withdrawal-spending too much time in their room.

In order to avoid the above situations, communication is vital. Talk to your student. It may be a misunderstanding or cultural difference. Feel free to ring the International Student Manager.

Please note that Sacred Heart College expects all international students to refrain from the consumption of tobacco, alcohol and non-prescribed drugs during their stay in New Zealand.

# **NEW ZEALAND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

The purpose of this Code is to provide a framework for educational providers for the pastoral care of international students. This is a legal document that requires Sacred Heart College to provide policies and procedures to adhere to the stipulations of the Code.

The procedures that affect a homestay family are:

1. All homestay members over the age of 18 must be police vetted. Sacred Heart College will provide the police vetting form.
2. All homestays are required to provide two referees.