POMPALLIER CATHOLIC COLLEGE
Te Kāreti Katorika o Pomapārie
State Highway 14, Maunu 0179
PO Box 10-042, Te Mai 0143
Whangārei, New Zealand
Tel: 09 438 3950
www.pompallier.school.nz

Homestay Hosting
Frequently Asked Questions

Do the students speak English?

Students' English abilities vary. All students have studied English, but there is a wide range in their level and comfort with the language. They will all study English at school and improve throughout their stay. Body language, gestures, and translators will all be helpful for communication.

Are background checks required for host families?

Yes, all household members 18 years and older need to complete police vetting. A police check is valid for 3 years.

Do I need to be committed to hosting when I submit my application?

No, there is no obligation to host. If you apply and are approved as a host family, you will always be asked first to consider hosting a student. There is no expectation that you will say yes.

How many students can I host?

You can host up to 4 students, though most families host 1 or 2.

When students visit with short-term groups, 2 students often stay together and can share a room.

Longer-term students must have their own bedroom. If 2 or more students share a homestay, they must be from different countries.

What if it doesn't work out?

A successful placement relies heavily on compatibility. We do our best to find a good match between each family and their student. However, if things are not going well, the school will provide support to try to work through any issues that come up. If necessary, a student can move to a different host family. Sometimes the fit just isn't right. A mismatch doesn't mean anyone is at fault or did a poor job. We handle re-placements neutrally to ensure everyone feels comfortable.

What if the student doesn't like my cooking or follows a special diet?

It is normal for students to adjust to new foods and tastes when they first arrive. It can be helpful to talk to your student about what foods they usually eat and what they like and try to have some of those foods available. Meals and cooking provide great opportunities for spending time together and cultural exchange. Invite your student to cook foods from their home.

If your student has dietary needs, you will be informed ahead of time. For special diets like vegetarian or gluten-free, you will receive an extra $15/week.

Do I have to cook 3 meals a day for my student?

No, many students help themselves to breakfast and lunch, and you don't have to change how you feed your family. Please make sure your student knows what foods they can help themselves to and show them how to use your kitchen appliances and where supplies are kept.

Do students have insurance?

Yes, all students have medical and travel insurance.

Do I need special insurance to host?

Please check with your insurance provider to let them know you will be hosting an international student and find out what coverage is provided.

What should I do before my student arrives?

Check your students' arrival information and arrival plan. Prepare their room, which should include a wardrobe or chest of drawers and bedside table. Please include warm blankets and a source of heating.

Think about the guidelines and rules for your home, and what kind of introduction or orientation you'll give your student. For example, what are your rules around device/internet use and water use/length of shower? How will laundry be handled? What appliances can they use in the kitchen, or do they need to be shown how to use anything? Are there any areas in the home that are not shared by all family members? What are your family's routines? What chores would you like the student to do to help around the house?

It can be helpful to write down the key information for your student, including your phone numbers and a short list of reminders.

What if I am going on holiday?

Please let the Homestay Coordinator know the dates you will be gone with as much advance notice as possible. The school will make arrangements for your student while you are gone. It is possible for you to suggest alternate accommodation for your student. The Homestay Coordinator will explore the possibility of having your suggested homestay carers approved as a temporary host family.

Do I take my student out to dinner, on excursions, or on family trips?

A lot of this is case by case, at your discretion. If your family is going out to dinner or having takeout instead of cooking at home, you would likely pay for your student. However, in the case of optional outings, you can invite your student and let them know what the cost will be if they decide to join. If you are going away for the weekend or to an activity with an entry fee, you can invite your student and let them know how much it will cost if they would like to come along.

What do I pay for and what does my student pay for?

You would pay for 3 meals a day, some snacks, utilities, and basic household supplies. Your student will pay for their school fees, activities, entertainment, personal items, and outings with their friends. If you aren't sure, please check with the Homestay Coordinator. Please do not loan money to your student.

Can I ask my student to participate in household chores?

Yes, and we encourage you to give your student some responsibilities at home, as you would for your own children. Many families ask their students to help with dishes or meals. Students are expected to keep their room tidy and clean up after themselves. It is a good idea to ask your student what their chores are at home, or what responsibilities they would like to have in your home. Some students may want to help care for pets or the garden.

Can my student stay home alone?

Students 14 years old and older are allowed to be at home by themselves, if they are comfortable doing so. They are not allowed to stay home alone overnight. Please let the Homestay Coordinator know if you need to be away from home overnight and your student will not accompany you.

Can my student catch a ride with friends or friend's parents?

Your student is allowed to ride with other trusted adults. They are not allowed to ride with anyone holding a restricted license. International students are not allowed to drive.

Can my student spend the night away from home?

Generally, your student is not allowed to spend the night away from home unless they are staying in accommodation that has been approved by the school. All homestay families are approved by the school, so they would be allowed to stay overnight with another international student. Students are allowed to sign up for camps or other multi-day programmes. Please speak to the school if this comes up.

What happens if my student gets sick?

Please report the absence to the school and take the same steps would you take if your own child was sick. We recommend calling Healthline on 0800 611 116.

However, if they are seriously ill and need to see a doctor or go to the hospital, please take them. Your student should pay for their treatment. Please help them retain all invoices. The school or their agent will help them get reimbursed. If your student is away from school for more than 3 consecutive days, we suggest that you notify the Homestay Coordinator.

Can I contact my student's parents?

Yes, you will get information about your student's family before arrival. You are welcome to be in touch. There may be a language barrier; translating apps may be helpful.

We ask that any concerns or issues first be brought to the school, rather than raised directly to the students' parents.

In case of emergency, please contact the school on our emergency contact number. The school will inform the student's family.