



# PALMERSTON NORTH GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

Established 1902

## HOMESTAY GUIDE AND INFORMATION

*Homestay is more than just a boarding situation. Homestay hosts extend their family to include another daughter by providing a warm and friendly home environment for the student.*

### **Kia Ora & Welcome to Palmerston North Girls' High School**

Each year in celebration of diversity, Palmerston North Girls' High School welcomes a number of international students who aspire to achieve individual excellence. For many of them homestay experience is the first impression of New Zealand. Our aim is to ensure that this experience is a positive one.

We value our homestays very highly and believe that the students' accommodation is as important as their academic course. We endeavor to match the right student with the right homestay so that both parties are able to enjoy each other's company and the opportunity to learn about their similarities and differences.

Our Homestay Manager, Jill Nash is always available to help you with any concerns you may have.

This Homestay Guide and Information has been prepared to provide you with general information that you will find useful as you register to become a homestay family with Palmerston North Girls' High School.

#### **Your first point of contact at Palmerston North Girls' High School (PNGHS)**

Our International Department will be your first point of contact at Palmerston North Girls' High School. Feel free to talk to us if you have any questions or concerns about hosting an international student.

Our contact details are:

**Director of International Education:** Mrs. Christine Prasitdamrong  
Email: [c.prasitdamrong@pnghs.school.nz](mailto:c.prasitdamrong@pnghs.school.nz)  
Telephone: +64 6 357 9194 ext 870  
Mobile: +64 27 588 8109

**Homestay Manager:** Mrs. Jill Nash  
Email: [homestay@pnghs.school.nz](mailto:homestay@pnghs.school.nz)  
Telephone: +64 6 357 9194 ext 859  
Mobile: +64 27 726 3823

**International Administrator:** Ms. Lina Hong  
Email: [l.hong@pnghs.school.nz](mailto:l.hong@pnghs.school.nz)  
Telephone: +64 6 357 9194 ext 870  
Mobile: +64 22 021 6605

**School Contact:** Telephone: +64 6 357 91914  
Website: [www.pnghs.school.nz](http://www.pnghs.school.nz)  
Palmerston North Girls' High School, 238 Fitzherbert Avenue,  
Palmerston North, New Zealand 4410

**24/7 Emergency Contact: +64 27 726 3823 (Jill Nash)**

## **Important Information:**

### **THE EDUCATION (PASTORAL CARE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS) CODE OF PRACTICE 2016**

Palmerston North Girls' High School (PNGHS) has agreed to observe and be bound by the Code of Practice for Pastoral Care for International Students published by the Ministry of Education. Copies of the code are available on the Ministry of Education's website: [www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international)

The purpose of the Code of Practice is to ensure a high quality pastoral care is delivered throughout all aspects for all international students during their study in New Zealand.

## **Guidelines for Homestay families**

Homestay families are expected to act as the international student's "family away from home". You are not merely offering room and board to these students. Your role is to offer a safe, caring, and nurturing environment for these students to live in, just as you would your own children. Conversely the international students are not to look at your relationship as if they are "guests" to be waited on hand and foot. The relationship we are looking for is one of mutual understanding, trust and one where the homestay students should respect you and your children (if you have children) as they should respect their own family in their home country. We hope that not only can your homestay student learn about New Zealand culture and lifestyle but that you too can learn about your student's culture and way of life. Many homestay families forge long-term relationships with their international students long after their return to their home countries.

## **Arrival and the first 48 hours**

Homestay hosts will be informed of the student's arrival details and we ask that the Homestay hosts to welcome the student at the airport/bus or train station. Otherwise it is important that the Homestay host is at home to greet the student when they first arrive. The student will be met at the airport, bus or train station by a staff member or the Homestay host. Students may arrive either during the week or on a weekend.

For anyone coming into a new environment the first 48 hours leave a lasting impression. Following are some ideas for making your student comfortable and will help to minimize the 'cultural shock' they may experience.

- Talk to them, show an interest, spend time getting to know the student
- Ask them what they would like to eat or drink
- Encourage them to contact their family
- Have a city map, bus timetable, list of useful contact numbers, etc. ready for them

## **Accommodation**

All homestays should provide the following:

- A fluent English-speaking environment
- An adequately heated bedroom for each student which includes:
  - a comfortable bed, bed linen and towels (laundered weekly)
  - a desk with lamp and chair and electronic points
  - reasonable clothes storage i.e. wardrobe
  - pillows, blankets or other adequate bed covers
  - working smoke alarm in or outside bedroom door

- Three healthy meals a day
  - Breakfast and lunch ingredients to be provided for student to make their own meal
  - Dinner prepared by a host member
- Allow the student full use of the household including telephone, television, and living areas. This includes helping the student understand appropriate use or time of use.
- Provide Internet access in the home and the student's bedroom at no extra charges (Please refer to Internet Usage Guidelines)
- Provide laundry facilities for washing, drying and ironing
- Provide cleaning supplies for the student to keep their private living space clean
- Invite the student to join family activities whenever possible, and help the student to feel at ease in the home
- Assist the student's adjustment to New Zealand and encourage the student to learn about New Zealand culture, lifestyle, activities, and family life.
- Welcome the student to Palmerston North, to their neighborhood, buses, and banks.
- Respect the rights, privacy, and culture of the student including religious and political beliefs.
- Pick up the student at their arriving point (airport, bus terminal, or train) and arrange for transportation for their departure.
- Attend orientation or cultural training opportunities, as they are made available by Palmerston North Girls' High School's International Department.

## What an International Student may want to know about living with you

There are many things New Zealanders do that are strange to students from other countries. You will need to explain carefully how you and your family live so confusion doesn't arise. Please talk through the following points with your student early in her stay with you; doing this will help to keep everyone happy.

### 1. The home:

- May I rearrange my bedroom?
- May I put pictures and posters on the walls in my bedroom?
- Where can I store my suitcases and boxes?
- What are the rules about using the telephone?
- What are the rules about using the internet and sending and receiving emails?
- May my friends phone me?
- May I play the stereo, TV, DVD etc?
- What jobs should I do around the house?
  - help with cooking
  - Keep my room tidy
  - Vacuum
  - Dust
  - Clean my bathroom
  - Help with washing etc?
- Are any areas of your home strictly private? Eg parents bedroom, study,....

### 2. Routines:

- What time must I get up on weekday mornings?
- What time must I get up on weekends and holidays?
- What time must I go to bed and turn the lights out on weekdays and on weekends?

- Will someone be at home when I get home from school?
- Can I invite friends around after school and on weekends?
- Can I have friends to stay overnight?
- How do I get around? Is there a bus route, can I cycle or walk, or will you take me in the car?
- Do you expect me to telephone or text if I am going to be late home from school? Or late home from any other outing?

### 3. Meals:

- What time are meals?
- What would you like me to do at mealtimes to help?
  - help with cooking
  - set the table
  - clear the table
  - wash up
  - put everything away after the meal
  - dry the dishes
  - empty the rubbish bin etc
- What should I do about making my lunch -
  - on weekdays?
  - on weekends?
- May I help myself to food and drink at any time, or should I ask first?

### 4. Laundry:

- Where should I put my dirty clothes?
- Should I wash my own clothes or underwear?
- Where should I dry any clothes that I wash?
- What is the procedure for ironing my clothes?
- May I use the iron, washing machine, dryer?

### 5. Bathroom:

- Where can I keep my bathroom toilet accessories?
- When is the best time to use the bathroom on weekday mornings?
- When is the best time for me to have a shower – morning or night?
- How long can I shower for?
- May I use your bathroom toiletries – shampoo, soap etc – or would you like me to use my own?
- How should I dispose of sanitary items ?

### 6. Family:

- What do I call you? Mum and Dad, or your Christian name?
- Do my host family have any special dislikes? eg chewing gum, loud music....
- When we go out as a family should I pay my own entrance fees, meals etc?
- If I have any problems who would you like me to go to?
- Who will help me with my homework if I need it?

## 7. Internet Use:

Internet connection must be provided for the following purposes:

- To facilitate academic research online and other course related work that requires internet connection
- To provide an efficient and economical option to communicate with family and friends back in their home country

The Internet connection is NOT intended to facilitate downloading and playing of movies, games, music, etc.

One of the purposes of Homestay is to provide students with an opportunity to interact and practice English with their homestay family. Palmerston North Girls' High School discourages students from spending excessive amounts of time on the Internet/computer or from using the Internet/computer in such a way that disturbs others in the home. Therefore, homestay hosts may enforce any reasonable house rules to ensure that students are using the Internet/computer in a responsible manner. For example, the homestay host may designate a time each day when all Internet/computer equipment must be shut off. Any abuse of or disregard for reasonable Internet/computer house rules and guidelines may result in a disconnection of the service.

*Is there anything else you would like the student to know?*

Remember to keep talking to each other, keep it light, and enjoy your time together. Please don't forget you can call the Homestay Manager – Jill on 027 726 3823 if you have any questions or problems.

## Student Care

**Absences:** If your student is unable to attend school, please ring the school's absence line 06 353 8062 and leave a message explaining the reasons for their absence. Please leave your name and contact number in case the school needs to get in touch.

**Phone calls and emails:** As soon as possible, students should be helped to purchase a calling card or plan for making phone calls. It is important to teach students how to make phone calls on both private and mobile phones as the calling codes will differ from their home country.

**Banking:** Students should be helped to open a bank account soon after their arrival. Students should notify their parents of their bank account number so that parents can make telegraphic transfers if they wish. Students are to be discouraged from carrying large amounts of money with them or keeping large amounts of cash at home.

**Insurance:** All students must have travel and medical insurance. Most claims will be small and students should pay for visits to the doctor or other health professional, request a receipt and then file a claim. The Homestay Manager can assist with the claim at School.

**Chores:** Students should not be expected to do a lot of chores, but should be asked to make their bed as well as tidy their room and participate in family chores such as setting the table and doing the dishes.

**Homework:** It is the homestay host's responsibility to help international students with their homework where they can. If you have any questions about this, feel free to contact Christine at [c.prasitdamrong@pnghs.school.nz](mailto:c.prasitdamrong@pnghs.school.nz) or 027 588 8019.

**Illness:** Student's health is sometimes upset by initial changes in their environment. Digestive upsets, tiredness and allergies are quite common. If your student is unwell and has to be absent from school, please notify the school before 9.00am. For some ailments, students will have remedies that are unfamiliar to us. Please respect their methods and show interest in different ways of treating illness. If it is necessary to see a doctor or dentist, please take the student to your family practitioner. If necessary, the school will assist.

**Transport:** Homestay families are responsible for organizing and assisting students to get to and from school. If the student is to take the bus then a bus pass will be issued by school. The student can bike or walk to school. If biking, the student will need a suitable helmet (required by law) and a bike lock. Students are not permitted to travel by taxi or with anyone other than Homestay Parents unless permission has been arranged with the international office.

**Children:** We ask that you tell your children, and that they understand that the student's bedroom is private and they cannot go in without your student's permission. Please do not leave your children with your student in a babysitting arrangement. Students must not be given this responsibility. If you have young children in your home, it is important to clearly explain safety matters relating to keeping poisons (medications and toiletries) and razors out of reach of small children.

**Going out:** Homestay families are responsible for the students during the duration of their stay with you. It is the homestay's responsibility to know where their homestay daughter is, how they can be contacted and who they are spending their time with, at all times. Please inform the Homestay Manager in advance or as soon as possible should your student wish to spend time with another student. A mobile phone number is not adequate as the only means of contact for the student. Homestay parent(s) need to have a physical address of the student's whereabouts.

**Sleepover:** Students are not allowed to spend the night at the home of another friend ("sleepover") without explicit permission from both the parents as well as the International Department of PNGHS. Student must apply with the International Department well ahead of time and permission may or may not be granted.

**Working:** Students are also not permitted to work (whether paid or voluntary) without the permission from the School and must have the necessary condition stated on their Student Visa. Otherwise, the student will be in violation of their immigration status in New Zealand. Please discuss this with the International Department if you have any questions about this matter

**Holiday travel:** Students are free to travel at the invitation of their host family and with permission from their family. We suggest that permission from family is sought well before travel arrangements are made to avoid penalties for cancellation. If the host family has to undertake travel that would entail some expense, the student can be invited to join the excursion and share the cost. Please be mindful that food cost is already included in their homestay fees. If necessary, alternative accommodation can be arranged for the student until the host family returns.

**Driving:** We do not encourage students to drive unless they were over 18 years of age. Should your student wish to take driving lessons, they can only do so with a licensed instructor, not with a host parent, sibling or adult friend. The student will still need to seek permission from School for this purpose.

**Smoking:** It is illegal in New Zealand for cigarettes to be sold to anyone under the age of 16 years. Smoking is not permitted at school or in the Homestay.

**Alcohol:** Drinking alcohol is not allowed in a Homestay situation unless you are over the age of 18. It is illegal in New Zealand for anyone under the age of 18 years to be served alcohol.

Homestay parent(s) should expect the same standard of behavior as they would from their own children of a similar age, but do make allowances for cultural differences.

The homestay daughter must not be left in the home alone in the night or overnight. If the homestay mother is going to be away overnight for any reason, please contact the Homestay Manager as soon as possible. Our Homestay Manager, Jill Nash is available 24/7 on 027 726 3823. Jill can be contacted during the daytime at school on: 06 357 9194 Ext 859.

## Division of Responsibilities

### **The school is responsible for:**

1. The procedures for selecting and monitoring of homestay hosts and homestay residences
2. Adhering to the conditions of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students including:
  - Assessment and selection of homestay placements, including police vetting and assessments of the homestay hosts suitability and residential facilities
  - Ongoing support for host families
  - Monitoring of placements, including meeting with students once a term to ensure accommodation is suitable
3. Providing parents and host families with advice and information on best practices
4. Providing parents and host families with a support infrastructure
5. A 24/7 emergency contact person

### **The homestay is responsible for:**

1. A safe and friendly living and study environment
2. Ensuring that your student is consuming a healthy regular diet. Please note that we would like to be informed if a student is skipping meal(s).
3. Day to day care including
  - Three nutritious meals a day and access to healthy snacks
  - Their own clean, tidy bedroom
  - Clean bed linen and towels each week
  - Study desk and chair
  - Adequate bedroom furniture to store clothes, books etc.
  - Lamp and adequate lighting
  - Adequate heating and ventilation
  - Working smoke alarm in or just outside their bedroom
  - Transport arrangements to and from school
  - Bathing or showering bathroom access
  - Laundering a reasonable amount of personal washing
  - Provide internet connection for student
4. Providing and enforcing clear simple “house rules” regarding such things as use of the bathroom/shower, telephone, laundry and electricity, smoking, coming home on time for meals, staying out late, etc
5. Explaining clearly the general household chores that the student (and other family members) are expected to undertake, e.g. assisting with washing dishes and cleaning their own bedroom etc and showing the student how to do these chores
6. Helping the student understand New Zealand customs and culturally appropriate behavior and to help them change or modify behavior when necessary
7. Assisting the student to find suitable ways to spend her leisure time and to provide the same support and supervision for leisure activities as they would for their own daughter
8. Helping and encouraging the student to speak English and to join in family activities
9. Respecting the student’s need for privacy and to try and understand and help the student overcome difficulties she may initially experience in a new country

10. Liaising closely with staff at the school to ensure the student is adjusting to her new culture and is benefiting from the experience of living in New Zealand
11. Respecting the student's religious and dietary practices
12. Assuming the day to day care of the student when she is not attending school in the same way as you would for your own daughter
13. Ensuring that the student attends school every week day
14. Advising school immediately:
  - If they have any problems or have any concerns about the student's welfare or behavior
  - If the student is unwell and cannot attend school
  - If there are any urgent medical decisions to be made
  - If for any reason the Homestay family cannot maintain any of the above responsibilities
15. Informing your insurance provider that you are hosting an International Student

**Host families are not expected to:**

1. Pay for student's personal phone calls
2. Cook, buy or supply special foods. Your student can do this if they wish.
3. Offer accommodation to visiting friends or relatives
4. Comply with unreasonable requests

## **Additional Information**

### **Why are International Students coming to New Zealand?**

English has become an essential language for international communications. Foreign students, who choose to come to New Zealand want to improve their English fluency, benefit from a world-class education and have an international experience. A number of these students will only be staying for a year or perhaps even shorter, while a good number of them will study here until they graduate. After graduation some stay in New Zealand to go to university, some return to their home countries, while others go on to post-secondary studies in countries such as the United States, the UK, Canada or Australia.

### **What can a Homestay Family prepare for an International Student?**

You are welcome to prepare an introductory profile of your family for us to send to the student's family prior to her departure to New Zealand. Include a description of your family, any pets you may have, lifestyle, and your neighborhood. Relate funny or typical family incidents. Include photos of your family, home, neighborhood, and Palmerston North.

It is helpful to learn a few words of your student's language and read up on the history and culture of your student's country of origin. Learn to pronounce your student's name correctly. Prepare your student's room with the required desk, lamp, bed, wardrobe, etc. Other niceties such as putting up a welcome banner, providing a plant, magazines/pamphlets, or perhaps a small gift or treat on the bed would no doubt be greatly appreciated and make the student feel welcome in her new home.

### **What are they like?**

First and foremost, they are young adults. They share many of the characteristics common to young people anywhere. As individuals they are at various levels of maturity and sophistication. Through time you will be



able to determine your student's personality and degree of responsibility. Just treat her accordingly. Some have previous international travel experience. Some have grown up in an urban environment. They may be used to a greater measure of personal independence than our children experience or less independence.

All of our students will have studied some English prior to arriving at our school. Their English abilities will vary greatly though. Some students will come to us quite fluent and confident in their English abilities while others will arrive here not feeling very comfortable at all in speaking and comprehending English. With these students you will have to repeat and re-word sentences. Check for comprehension. Be patient and understanding, but encourage them to speak English immediately. Explain that it is polite to speak English in front of speakers of English or other languages in New Zealand. Although it is difficult and frustrating to speak English all the time, it is rude to speak a foreign language in their presence.

### **How will they adjust to life in Palmerston North?**

The first few weeks of the homestay will involve significant adjustments on the part of the students and the homestay families. Often students are away from their families for the first time. They can experience jet lag, culture shock, and homesickness. Homestay families should expect "shyness". Generally speaking, Oriental students are not used to outward expression of affection such as hugging in their own cultures, therefore may be embarrassed by it. Students from many other cultural backgrounds are much more comfortable with such outward signs of affection. Furthermore, the academic workload is very demanding for these students, especially in the beginning. Be supportive of your student, comfort her and try to ease the pressure she may be feeling to excel. The homestay family should do whatever they can to smooth the way for the student and at the same time adjust family life to accommodate the student as a new family member. Within the first few days of arriving the homestay family should:

- Inform the student how to address you, e.g. Mr/Mrs, John/Mary, Mum/Dad, etc
- Familiarise them with home routines, e.g. mealtimes, snacks, showers, laundry, chores, how to make a bed, etc
- Demonstrate how to use all electrical appliances
- Invite the student to go grocery shopping
- Give the student a house key, home address, and phone number
- Take the student on a sightseeing tour of the area (optional)

Because of the cultural and language barriers, it may be difficult at first for the students to make friends. They will not automatically make firm friends with family siblings. Much like natural siblings, they will relate better to some family members than others.

### **Can Homestay Families expect International Students to conform to family rules of conduct?**

Absolutely! It would be wise to establish with your student an understanding of house rules and regulations as soon as possible. Be sure to explain why you have set such guidelines. Your student will likely conform to your household routines and family rules much more easily if she is clear on just what they are.

- Students must understand that hosts are surrogate parents – not landlords or hoteliers. Students are expected to conform to the normal rules of family life and contribute to the routine operation of the household.
- Overnight stays outside of the family home and out of town travel are subject to the prior approval of both the Homestay Manager and the homestay family. It is the duty of the homestay family to make personal contact with the parents in the home where the student will be temporarily staying before approval for the overnight stay will be considered.

- The students must not be left overnight unattended without any homestay parents. Please contact the Homestay Manager to arrange alternative accommodation for the student if you are going away overnight and cannot take the student with you.
- If students choose to participate in family holidays and/or travel where costs are incurred, they are expected to assist in bearing the costs. When students choose not to participate in the activity, they must accept alternate arrangements made by the homestay family.
- You will have to determine a curfew for your student based on her age and maturity. Make sure that the curfew is clearly communicated to your student and that they always communicate to you where they are going and who they will be with.
- Explain clearly your rules regarding:
  - a) showers and baths
  - b) use of the telephone (the student may have her own mobile phone)
  - c) table manners
  - d) manners in general
  - e) calling home when late
  - f) transportation around town

### **What support is available for Homestay Families?**

The Director of International Education and the Homestay Manager are based at the International Office and work to help the students with any school related, personal problems or concerns. They are available to act as a liaison between the students, the family and the school. Homestay families and their students should therefore direct any questions or concerns regarding homestay to the Homestay Manager.

The Homestay Manager will give you a call occasionally to say hello and see how things are going. However, please remember that you can give her a call as well – even if it's just to say that everything is fine. Furthermore, academic and personal counselling services will be available at the school for your student in the same way that they are available to any local student.

If a student requests a homestay change, the following steps will be taken:

- 2 weeks of identifying problems and discussion with both parties to resolve issues identified
- If the issue remains unresolved after 2 weeks, a new homestay will be arranged. Current homestay family will be given a 2 weeks notice period of intention to terminate Homestay agreement unless advised otherwise.
- A student requesting to change homestay twice within a year will be undergo a thorough interview/investigation before a third placement is considered. In the event that a further Homestay cannot be identified, the students' parents will be notified as the Tuition Agreement may be terminated on this basis.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR HOMESTAY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

This information sheet contains information about what you need to do in case of an accident or emergency involving your International Student. Please keep it in a safe place – e.g., by the telephone or family notice board. Homestay parents need to ensure that everyone who takes care of the International Student is aware of these procedures.

### **Palmerston North Girls' High School's responsibility:**

Palmerston North Girls' High School has the responsibility in the case of emergencies during school hours and also outside of school hours for all International Students when the student is in a Homestay. This means that Palmerston North Girls' High School should be contacted as soon as possible in these situations. Palmerston North Girls' High School will help and support you and make sure that all appropriate procedures are followed.

### WHAT TO DO

#### IN AN EMERGENCY

Stay calm and act appropriately:

1. Remove the student from danger
2. Apply first aid
3. Call an ambulance

**THEN** contact the school's 24-hour contact person:

24 Hours contact person:     **Jill Nash - Homestay Manager**

24 Hours contact number:     **027 726 3823**

Palmerston North Girls' High School will arrange for an interpreter if needed.

Palmerston North Girls' High School is responsible for contacting the International Student's parents. You are not responsible for this. In an emergency or accident, contact with the International Student's parents should be made by Palmerston North Girls' High School ONLY.

#### IN CASE OF ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS

If an International Student is injured or unwell and:

1. Your level of concern is high – take the student to the nearest Accident & Emergency Department or if appropriate, dial 111 and ask for an ambulance
2. Your level of concern is low or moderate – take the student to your GP

Please ensure you notify the Homestay Manager.

**IF YOU ARE CONCERNED FOR YOUR STUDENT'S WELLBEING AND UNSURE OF WHAT TO DO, PLEASE CALL THE EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSON/HOMESTAY MANAGER FOR ADVICE.**