



Te Kura Tuarua o  
**Ruawai College**  
Kimihiā ngā maunga teitei | Seek the highest peak

# HOMESTAY PROVIDERS'

# HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO OUR KURA







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# Welcome!



Kia ora! Welcome to the Homestay Whānau!!

You've been selected as a homestay family because you have the values we are looking for in a provider. We know our students will be in good hands with you and your family.

We are always available to you and we are here to help. Our contact number is 021 260 9989 email: or alternatively on [international@ruawaicollege.school.nz](mailto:international@ruawaicollege.school.nz)

Hosting for the first time...

Ruawai College has agreed to observe and be bound by the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021. Please visit this website to read/download a copy.







# Overview

## Outline of your Role



As a host parent, your concern, care and hospitality will be the highlight of your students' stay in NZ. You play the most important role in assisting your student to settle into their new environment and experience everyday life in a new place. As you open your home to students, you gain the opportunity to learn about new cultures as well.

It is important to support students by settling into a good routine and helping them to feel a part of your family.

Set the same boundaries, rules, and allowances for your international student as you would for your children. It is important to bear in mind that you are hosting a young adult who needs boundaries and guidance. As a host family, you are accepting a student into your home and your rules, are their boundaries. It is imperative that you establish these at the beginning of the homestay.

Provide a caring home environment and be supportive of your student's learning needs.

-Have fun!





# How the Process Works\_\_\_\_\_

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Student information such as their family, food requirements, sports interests, cultural interests, outdoor or other aspects that the student is interested in, is collated by the international department.

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We then consult with a potential homestay family and the student and we will provide information about the student to the family.

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03

Once the homestay provider is confirmed, we confirm arrival details, airport pickup and any other details that are necessary.

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04

The school will start weekly homestay payments on the day the student moves in, and each week thereafter.

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05

When the student leaves your home, the final payment is paid accordingly.





# Homestay Family Support



## Placements

Monitoring of Placements, including visiting homestays at least twice a year to ensure the homestay continues to be suitable and discuss any changes in the household.

## Open Communication

Further meetings and training provided for families with advice, support and information on best practice.



## Relationships

If there are persistent problems between the student and homestay family, the international team will endeavour to assist with mediation.

# Host Responsibilities

## NZ Home Culture



Homestay parents must attend two Academic Conferences per year if they have a long-term student. This is important as it will inform you how the student is doing at school and subsequently how you can offer support at home.

It is vital to offer a safe and friendly living environment and while students are often excited, they're very nervous too. Students will be tired and stressed on arrival and will certainly appreciate your calmness and welcome during their settling-in period.

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Include the student as part of your family — meals, outings, going shopping, participating in sports and encourage them to join clubs and activities to make friends outside of the home as well.

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Treat the student with respect and have a sympathetic ear as they can feel lonely and homesick at any time during their stay.





# General Household Responsibilities



Making time to fill out the “First Night Questionnaire” & “Getting to know me” survey provided by the student. This will provide conversation early on and helps to obtain ‘basic’ helpful information about the student.

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A separate bedroom for the student, with a desk and adequate lighting for study and storage facilities.

A change of bed linen as required and also personal washing done each week.

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If possible, take your student to school if it’s raining so they arrive with dry clothes and shoes.

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If your student has an activity like a sports event or is meeting friends at the movies, please offer transport to them and arrange for their transport home. You may want to liaise with other parents at these times.

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It is important to assist in getting your student to school in the first few days. You could either bring the student to school on the first day or you could show the student how to get to school before their first day. The student could be nervous and helping them gain confidence in this area is a must.

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A clear set of house rules in written form to establish boundaries early in the relationship to avoid misunderstandings. Sometimes charts are helpful.

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Three meals per day and access to snacks. Show your student where the ingredients for breakfast are so they can prepare their meal, along with ingredients for lunch so they can take a packed lunch to School. If your student chooses to buy their lunch at school, they must pay for the food themselves. You could ask the student if there is something, in particular, they would like for their lunch, i.e. yoghurt or fruit so that you can try and buy it in the grocery shopping.

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Adequate heating in the student's room. If you provide a heater, please let the student know how to use the heater and how long is appropriate to use it for each day.

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# Companionship

## Culture Shock, Homesickness

Being in a different country with little understanding of the culture or language can be very stressful. Classes that will be taught in English are very tiring for them. Many students report using all their “power/energy” at school and often enjoy spending quiet time in their room. Please respect this. It is not because your student does not like you. However, please watch the amount of time your student spends alone; a lot of time out can also be a sign of Culture Shock/Homesickness.

When your student first arrives in New Zealand, they will be excited and alert to all the new sights, tastes, smell, and sounds. This response soon wears off and can give way to feelings of loneliness and despair.

Signs of culture shock/Homesickness are Tiredness; unhappiness; feelings of helplessness; wanting to be alone.

It is normal for your student to exhibit one or more of these signs, although you need to watch for patterns of behavior that are largely characterized by these symptoms.

You can help your student prevent/overcome culture shock by talking to them, making sure they are okay, smiling, and showing them you genuinely care about their well-being.

Encourage your student to speak with other international students about their experiences.

Show compassion to your student and think how you would want a parental figure to respond to your child if they were studying overseas and experiencing the same emotions.

Please do not hesitate to contact the International Office if you feel your student is experiencing more intense homesickness than should be expected. The school will arrange for a counsellor to speak with the student at school to ensure his/her safety and happiness.



Most students will have their own dictionaries. These are usually electronic and are a great help, especially if the student's English is poor or lacks confidence in speaking.

Speak slowly (NOT loudly), in short, and simple sentences. Try rephrasing your sentence if the student does not understand what you have said.

SMILE a lot when repeating yourself – this helps to remove any embarrassment felt and reassures the student that it's okay to make mistakes.

Offer your student the choice of calling you Mrs, Mr, Ms or using your first name. Please be aware that in many cultures, younger people refer to their elders by their title rather than their first name, consequently your student may be reluctant to call you by your first name when they first arrive.

# COMMUNICATION TIPS





# Meals, Eating and Heating

Check with your student what they like and incorporate that into your grocery shopping. Some students love to cook and spend time in the kitchen, and encouraging them to do this will lessen their homesickness and give them the confidence to do what they love. It's a great way to share culture through food. Check with your student what foods they like and dislike – remember at first, he/she may not know New Zealand foods or what it's called here.

In many countries making a noise when eating is an acceptable way of showing appreciation for the meal. You may like to explain about cultural differences as you demonstrate New Zealand table manners and practices - all part of living in a different culture!

When dining out as a family, please remember that it's your responsibility to provide this meal, but it is ok to set a budget of \$20-\$35.

## Heating at Home

Expectations around heating and keeping warm are different in a New Zealand climate. Take some time to explain to your student how heating in your house works and be prepared for them to feel the cold before “winter”. The concept of keeping rooms, their bedroom and their bed warm may be new to them.

## Toilet and Bathroom/Laundry

Please be aware that your student may have different washing/cleansing practices to you and your family. As with other areas of life, being aware of these differences and talking about suitable compromises can avoid any problems occurring.

Please change your students' sheets once a week and make sure they know where to put their dirty washing

Please establish a routine/day for laundry and make sure they know how to use the laundry if they need to.

Set expectations for your student using the shower once a day generally and that hot water is limited for the whole family

If they are using a shared bathroom, advise them how to keep it clean after they've used it. Advise your student how to use the facilities in the bathroom and set a time limit on the shower.

Explain that the toilet paper is flushed down the toilet

For female students, advise them where to put their sanitary items and have a separate waste-paper basket for them that has a lid on it

# Setting Boundaries

**SET YOUR EXPECTATIONS AND RULES EARLY TO  
AVOID DIFFICULTIES LATER ON**



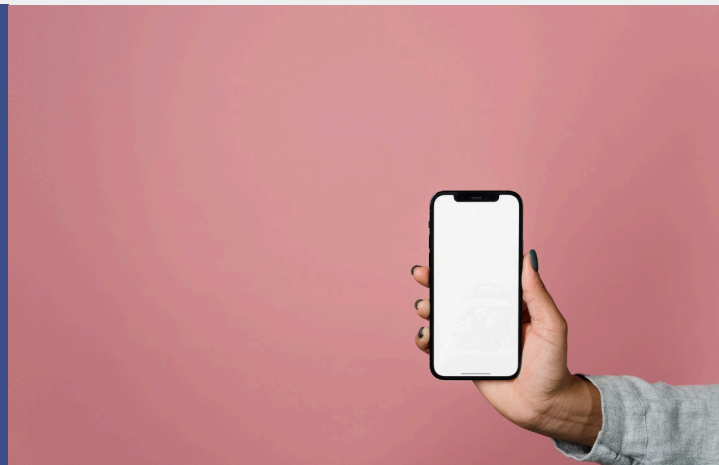
## SLEEPING

Please show your student how to make their bed. Set reasonable hours for bedtime during the week as you may have different rules for the weekend.

## PHONE

Your student is most likely to have their own mobile phone and possibly their own data plan.

We ask that the students have credit on their phones so they can be contacted easily by text or phone.



## INTERNET

Most students will use internet based as so communication systems such as Facebook, or other platforms communication is cheap and easy.

If you are a household with limited WIFI, you will need to negotiate with your student about internet usage



# Health



Any health problems such as asthma or allergies, will be have been declared on the students' application form and this information will be passed onto you so that you're aware of this.

If your student is unwell and needs to see a doctor, please feel free to take them to your family practice or to the local GP in Dargaville. The student will need to take their passport with them. It's not necessary to tell the International Office if you're taking your student to the doctor as we trust your judgement.



If your student is going to be away from school, please call the front office at 09 439 2216 and leave a message OR email [admin@ruawaicollege.school.nz](mailto:admin@ruawaicollege.school.nz). The student will then need to bring a note to school which is signed by a homestay parent.

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If your student is unwell at School, they may go to the School Nurse and you may be called by the front admin office to collect your student and return them home. If you are unable to come to the school, it is expected that you will make arrangements with a friend or family member to do so on your behalf (the same as you would for your own child).

All students will have health and travel insurance as part of their enrolment and will cover doctor's visits and prescriptions. Students need to pay this first and then make a claim afterwards. Please remind your students to keep the receipt to make the claim, this also goes for ACC.

# Holidays & Travel Policies

During the term breaks, it is the hostfamilies' responsibility to ensure that the student has activities and plans to occupy their time during the break.

Students must complete a Request to Travel form and this needs to be signed by the homestay family. Separate approval from the parent(s) (or in some cases, their Agency who is acting on behalf of the parents) must also be obtained. Approval is a requirement under the "Code".

The form must be completed for any travel outside of Auckland for any number of nights.

The form needs to be given to the International Office at least 2 weeks before travel is due to commence and no bookings should be finalized before the school has approved. Leave will not be granted where the agent of a student who is acting as a guardian denies permission.

All travel must be through an approved organization or with a homestay family. Students must obey all school rules and standards of behaviour while traveling.

Traveling to and from the airport or transport for students to travel during the school year is the responsibility of the host family. If you are unable to transport your student, please ensure that arrangements are made so that your student knows ahead of time how they will travel.

For students leaving their homestay temporarily during the school year (on an approved holiday), a holding fee will be paid at 50% of the full rate per day. The holding fee is not paid holidays during summer (November to January).

Under the provisions of the "Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students", the school must ensure that leave is only granted where it can be assured that the student will be supervised by approved adults and will be staying in accommodation which meets the appropriate standard.





# Temporary Accommodation

If you require temporary placement of your homestay student due to work commitments or health issues for example which is 7 days or less, please let the Homestay Co-Ordinator know at least 2 weeks before, ensuring we can arrange alternative care. If you arrange it, please advise the international office to check they are a suitable family. Both households will receive 50% of the homestay fee. If the temporary placement is longer than this, we will discuss with you other possible options.

You must not leave a student unsupervised overnight at any stage regardless of their age.

If a student stays overnight or a weekend with a friend (must be an approved home) on a casual basis, no payment is made to this family and no deduction is made to the family.



# Regulations

- Students must be in a homestay approved by Ruawai College and under the school's supervision.
- Students are not permitted to own or rent a flat, room, house, or apartment, or live on their own.
- Students are not permitted to own or drive a car unless prior written approval has been granted by the school, parents, and homestay family, and all required conditions have been met.
- Students are not permitted to smoke, vape, drink alcohol, or use illegal substances.
- If there are problems in a particular homestay, the student must first discuss them with the International Office. If the problems persist, the International Office will arrange for a change of homestay.
- Students must not make their own private homestay arrangements while in an approved homestay.
- Students are required to show appropriate behaviour at all times.
- All homestay providers, students, and the student's guardian must agree to sign the Ruawai College Homestay Agreement.
- All homestay providers must sign a disclosure form so Ruawai College can complete a police vetting check. Any adverse information may prevent the placement of a student within that homestay.
- All homestays will be subject to a visit and training session before the student's placement.
- All homestay providers must become familiar with the Homestay Providers' Handbook and must follow the guidelines to support international students.
- If Ruawai College believes a student has been, or is at risk of being, ill-treated, harmed, abused, or neglected, the International Director or Homestay Coordinator will move the student immediately.
- The International Director will also notify Oranga Tamariki or the New Zealand Police of any concerns.



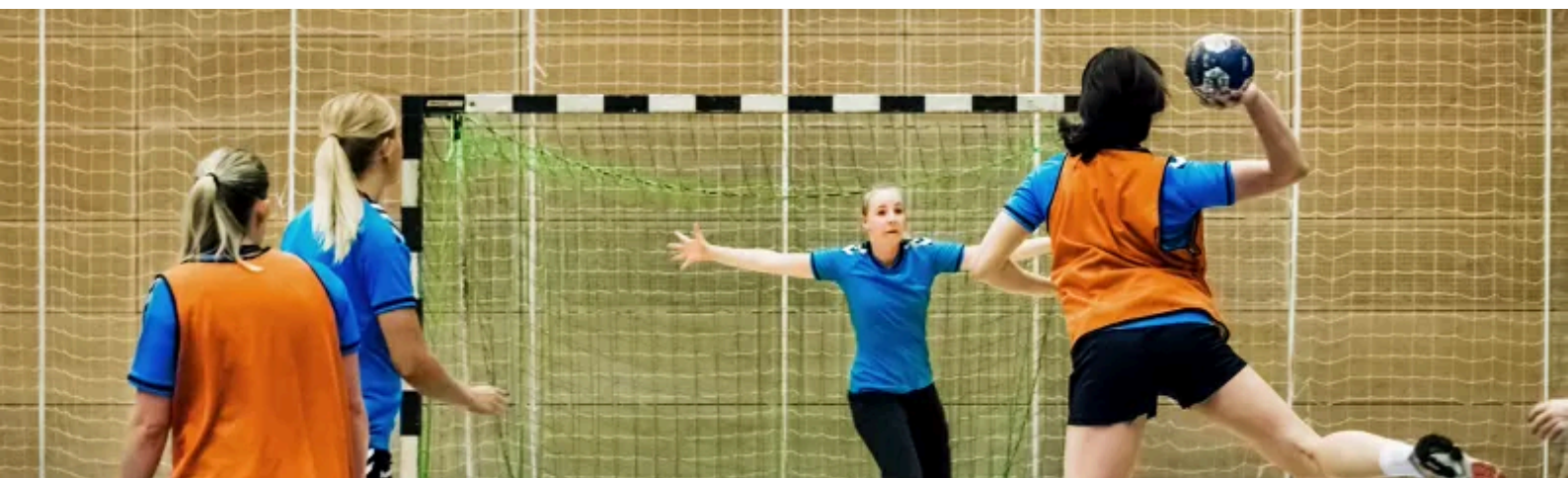


# Guidelines for Hosting

It is not the position of the School to impose rules upon international students who live within your home.

However, we do believe that it is prudent to provide our host families with guidelines, so that there is consistency among house rules for all international students. The students do talk among themselves and compare the rules of different homes to their own.

- The normal school rules, including the Code of Conduct and Code of Behaviour, also apply to international students.
- The student must always leave the name, address, and phone number of where they are going, as well as when they expect to be home.
- If host parents are unsure who the family is, they should call the family to check that the student has permission to visit. This applies to students under the age of 18.
- The International Office should be informed so they can ensure there is a police vetting on file.
- Safety is paramount, as international students are a long way from home and look to their host family for guidance and support.
- Students will have homework. The amount each night will depend on the year level of the student:
  - Year 9 and Year 10: 1 hour per week for each subject.
  - Year 11: 1½ hours per week for each subject.
  - Year 12 and Year 13: at least this amount of homework each night.
- By Year 12 and Year 13, students should be taking responsibility for the amount of time they spend on their own homework.
- If there is no homework set, students should read and talk in English with their host family. This will help build vocabulary.
- If a student is going to be late home, or if their plans change, they are expected to immediately telephone their host family and let them know.
- Students are expected to be at school before 8.40 am every day, ready to be in their first period class on time.
- Host parents should set clear guidelines as soon as possible around:
  - Bathroom usage
  - Shower time
  - Lights out
  - Quiet times
  - Talking on the phone
  - Computers and devices being offline
- Many students, particularly from Asian countries, may be used to staying up late studying, chatting online, or talking on the phone with friends.
- Time limits and cut-off times should be negotiated between each host family and student.
- Students should always sleep at their assigned homestay unless permission has been granted by the host parents.
- A travel permission form must be completed if the student is staying somewhere else, unless it is another vetted homestay family.
- Students may be asked to take their turn doing minor chores within their homestay.



# Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021



“The Code” is a document that provides a framework for service delivery by educational providers and their agents to international students. The Code sets out the minimum standards of advice concerning care that is provided by educational providers to international students concerning

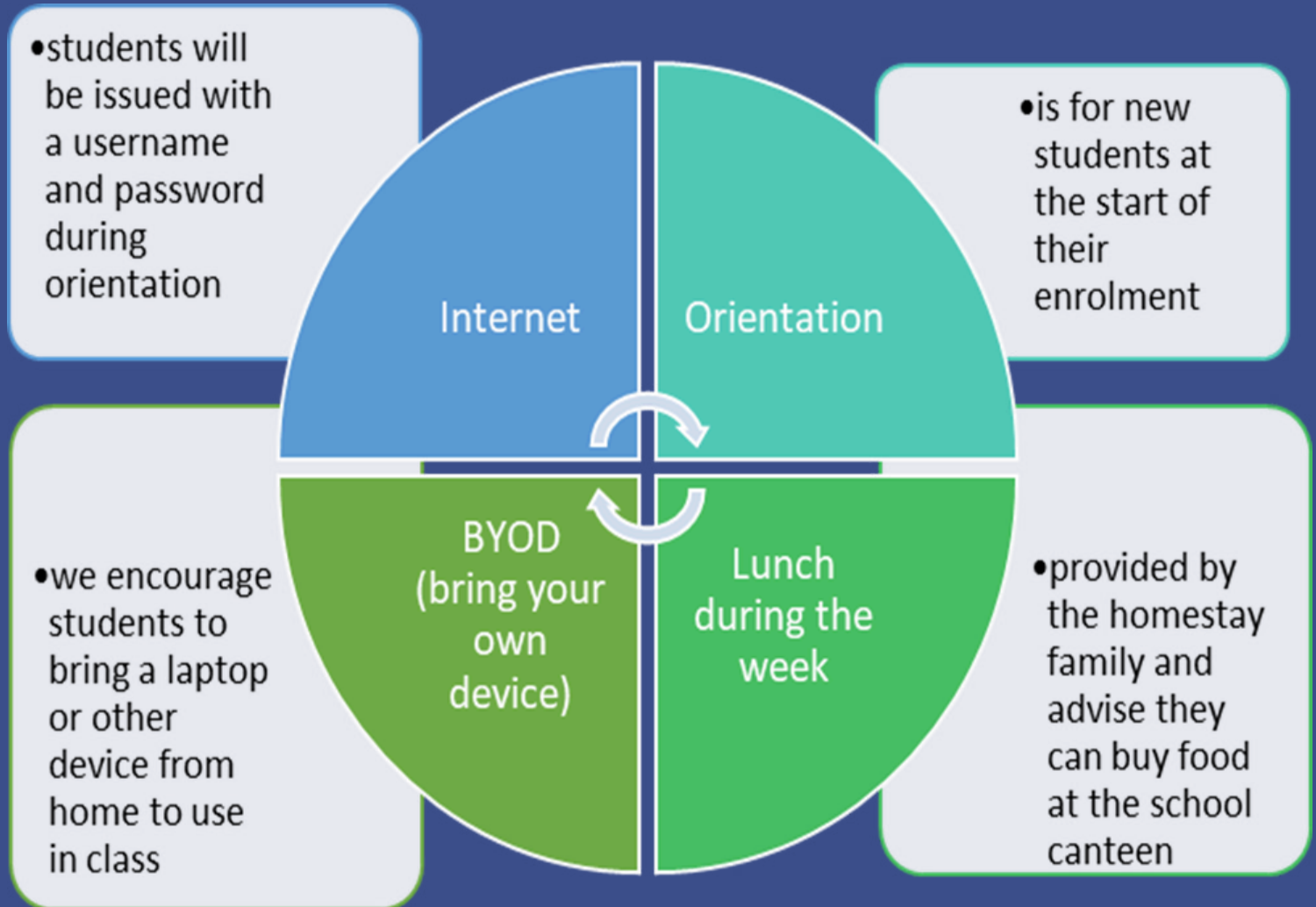
The Code is issued under New Zealand education legislation and sets out the minimum standards required of education providers enrolling international learners.

Ruawai College as the provider, must be a signatory to the Code, to ensure the welfare of our international students.

- Assessment and selection of homestay placements, including police vetting and assessments of the homestay carer’s suitability and the residential facilities.
- Ongoing training for host families.
- Meeting with the student at least once per term, outside of the homestay, to ensure that the accommodation is suitable.
- Monitoring of homestay placements, including visiting the homestay provider in their home at least twice per year, to ensure the facilities and environment are suitable for the student.
- Providing parents and host families with advice and information on best practice.
- Providing parents and host families with support infrastructure.
- Providing a 24-hour, 7-day contact number for emergencies.



# Schooling and Education



# Older Students

## Turning 18

- The International Office is responsible for the student while they are enrolled at school, which includes ensuring the homestay provision is safe and secure.
- Homestay providers are responsible for all students in their care.
- Students are required to attend school as per their student visa conditions.

## Driving

- Confirmation is required from parents approving their child to obtain a licence.
- Students are to advise the car vehicle number plate that they are driving.
- If there is to be a car used, the arrangements will be discussed with the host family.



## Working

- Students who are 16 years or older and studying in Year 12 or Year 13 can work 20 hours per week during term time and full-time during the holidays.
- Students must have an IRD number, as wages are taxable.
- The International Director can provide a support letter for this application.
- A support letter from parents is also needed if the student is under 18 years old.

**EMPLOYMENT  
NEW ZEALAND**





# Contact List

Below is a list of people you may need to contact:

| Description                                                    | Phone                 | Email or Address                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Ruawai College<br>General Enquiries                            | (09) 439 2216         | admin@ruawaicollege.school.nz         |
| <b>Aidyn Rasmussen</b><br><i>International<br/>Coordinator</i> | 021 260 9989          | arasmussen@ruawaicollege.school.nz    |
| <b>Debs Parkinson</b><br><i>Homestay<br/>Coordinator</i>       | (09) 439 2216 ext 221 | international@ruawaicollege.school.nz |
| <b>Dargaville Medical<br/>Centre</b><br><i>Ruawai Location</i> | (09) 439 8079         | 12 Freyberg Road, Ruawai              |