

# FSAC Ltd

## Board Policy No 15. Homestay Management

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# Homestay Family Selection and Screening Procedure No. 15.1

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2016

Document Approval and Version Control	
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Contact Officers: Position: Name:	Next Review: 30.06.2016

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

[Board Policy No. 15 – Homestay Management](#)

## 2. PROCEDURE STATEMENT

The following procedure outlines the process for Homestay Host recruitment and selection. This procedure has been developed to meet the requirements of the ESOS National Code 2007 and Student visa (Condition 8532) which require that appropriate arrangements have been made for the accommodation, welfare and support of students less than 18 years of age.

### **Student Protection**

**Special Note:** This Policy should be read in concert with Policy No. 2 Anglican Church Southern Queensland Student Protection Policy and Procedure framework which deals with matters of harm, sexual abuse or inappropriate behaviour. The Student Protection policy and procedures must be kept at the forefront when considering and implementing the contents of this policy and associated procedures. In the event that reasonable suspicions that harm, and/or sexual abuse has occurred or is likely to occur, the Student Protection Policy and Procedures must be followed.

#### 2.1. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- St John’s Anglican College and St John’s International College staff
- Potential Homestay families
- Residents of Homestay Hosts’ homes
- Visitors to Homestay Residences
- Employees of Homestay Hosts (if they meet a “regular contact” provision)

#### 2.2. PRINCIPLES:

St John’s International College will uphold the following principles under this procedure:

- St John’s believes all Homestay Students have the right to feel safe, be listened to, be involved in decisions that affect them, have their cultural values respected, not be unjustly discriminated against on the basis of their status, activities, expressed opinions or beliefs of their parents or carers, and have their best interests considered.
- Students under the care of St John’s should be provided with the knowledge and information they require to feel empowered to take action in the event of abuse or neglect.
- St John’s acknowledges that Homestay Students are unique and valued individuals and deserve to be treated with care and respect.
- St John’s recognises that respect for Homestay Students is the foundation upon which all Homestay policies and procedures are developed.
- St John’s is committed to promoting the wellbeing of Homestay Students under its protection by protecting their security, safety and wellbeing.

#### 2.3. Affiliated Authorities

- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *Anglican Church Southern Queensland – Student Protection policy and Procedure Framework*
- *Child and Youth Risk Management and Screening Act 2000*
- Staff Handbook

### 3. SELECTION:

St John’s International College recognises that risk management for children in Homestay arrangements begins with the selection of the right people to provide appropriate accommodation, support and general welfare to Homestay Students, and continues by having consistent procedures in place for all stakeholders to follow, with adequate training and support to ensure that they comply with these procedures.

In choosing a Homestay Host the College will comply with any relevant legislation and be satisfied of the ability of the Homestay Host to care for the student in a safe and secure environment, and to provide age appropriate support and supervision for a child or adolescent attending school and adjusting to living in a new environment.

To be considered for selection in the College’s Homestay programme, all prospective Homestay Hosts must agree to uphold the provisions of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland Student Protection Policy and Procedure framework and the Homestay Code of Conduct, and follow the guidelines and procedures outlined.

In selecting a Homestay Host, the College will ensure (as a minimum) that:

- Host families are carefully selected from within the school community (where possible).
- All Host families have undergone a police check as required by Queensland law.
- Host families are interviewed and assessed by a trained Homestay Manager.
- Host families receive a comprehensive Homestay information pack, including a Homestay Handbook, to ensure their visiting student has a fulfilling Homestay experience.
- Host families can provide visiting students with suitable accommodation and a stable environment for the duration of their stay.
- Host families are aware of, and can effectively manage potential risks associated with activities undertaken by visiting students.
- Host families agree to provide assistance to access appropriate transport to and from the College and College related activities.
- Host families agree to the College’s Homestay Code of Conduct and the Anglican Church Southern Queensland Student Protection Policy and Procedure framework

St John’s International College has an established Homestay information pack, which in addition to the Homestay Handbook, includes:

- an Introductory Letter to Homestay Host
- an Application to provide Homestay Accommodation
- Terms and Conditions
- instructions on how to apply for a Blue Card
- the Anglican Church Southern Queensland Student Protection Policy and Procedure framework
- the College's Homestay Accommodation and Welfare Procedure
- Homestay Code of Conduct

#### 4. Screening:

As part of the Homestay application and selection process all Homestay Hosts (including parents of the school, but excluding those who are relatives of the child staying with them) must have positive prescribed notices (Blue Cards) issued by the Public Safety Business Agency under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* **except** when an exemption applies under the Act.

#### 5. Induction:

All new Homestay Hosts are required to attend a compulsory induction session, conducted by the St John's International College Homestay Manager. These induction programs are designed to make Homestay Hosts aware (as a minimum) of the following:

- The College's commitment to providing environments which are safe, caring and supportive to children and young people.
- The College's policies and procedures relating to the protection from harm of students in Homestay arrangements.
- Procedures to follow when harm is disclosed or suspected
- Their rights and responsibilities
- What is expected of them
- What they can and can't do – the boundaries of their roles
- The roles of the key people in the College and to whom the Homestay Host should report or go for help
- What to expect if there is an allegation of harm made against them or to them
- Reporting and grievance procedures

These induction sessions are run periodically throughout each year and are designed to:

- Enhance the skills and knowledge of Homestay Hosts, enabling them to contribute positively to the growth and development of the students in their care
- Reduce exposure to risks
- Support friendly environments for children and young people
- All Homestay Hosts, and prospective Hosts, are also provided with a copy of the School's Homestay Handbook as part of the induction process.

#### 6. Monitoring:

Monitoring of the service provided by all Homestay Hosts is conducted by the College through the Homestay Manager and includes (but is not limited to):

- Conducting periodic surveys of Homestay Students, which includes an evaluation of their accommodation and welfare arrangements and taking action as required
- Regular contact with the Homestay Host by phone and/or email to discuss and review the arrangement
- Conducting informal meetings with Homestay Students and pastoral care meetings to monitor adjustment; at a minimum once per study period
- Where appropriate liaise with teachers of Homestay Students
- Undertake visits to the Homestay Residence to check on the wellbeing and safety of students on a yearly basis
- College's Complaints Register
- Risk self-assessment by Homestay Hosts
- Exit statements by Homestay Students and Hosts

Homestay Hosts are also encouraged to contact the College's Homestay Manager immediately if they have any concerns.

- Audits of the Blue Card Registers will be conducted as part of the College's Risk Management Program, at least annually, and all Homestay Hosts are required, on an annual basis, to sign a register that they have read and understood the Anglican Church Southern Queensland Student Protection Policy and Procedure framework.

## **7. Professional Development:**

Professional development opportunities in relation to student protection will be provided on a regular basis by the College's Homestay Manager.

In addition Homestay Hosts are provided with regular updates regarding legal compliance with respect to child safety and risk management, to address any issues regarding Homestay arrangements.

## **8. Communication and Support Strategies:**

Policies and procedures have been developed for the education of all students in St John's International College regarding the prevention of harm, and the process for disclosure of, or the suspicion of harm, including self-harm.

The Anglican Church Southern Queensland Student Protection Policy and Procedure framework is made available to Homestay Students and parents via individual school websites, student diaries, Homestay Handbooks and the St John's Anglican College website.

The Policy is also displayed on at least one noticeboard within the College and the attention of parents and students drawn to the Policy at least twice a year via school newsletters.

A copy of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland Student Protection Policy and Procedure framework is also available from the College's Student Protection Officer.

This Homestay Risk Management Strategy is also available from the College.

**9. PROCEDURE  
ADMINISTRATION**

A Student Guide for Protection from Abuse or Harm is included in all student handbooks and students are informed at assembly and regular classroom meetings about how to protect themselves, and whom to report if they are concerned about their safety.

To ensure that all Homestay Hosts, adults who permanently live with the Homestay Host, visitors to the Homestay residence and paid employees of the Homestay Host, understand what is expected of them with regard to providing a safe and secure environment for students in Homestay arrangements, this Homestay Risk Management Strategy is directed, by each school, to the attention of all Homestay Hosts through the Homestay Handbook, and in particular, during the induction process for all new Homestay Hosts.

In accordance with procedure development and review protocol this procedure will be recorded as an authorised procedure approved by the Senior Leadership Team at its meeting of the date shown on the front of this procedure document.

The procedure will be reviewed twelve months from the date of the approval shown herein.

Notwithstanding the scheduled review, should any circumstance change materially before the 12 month review period, the procedure will be immediately reviewed in order to maintain appropriate accuracy, relevance and authority.