



**Subject: YOUNGER OVERSEAS STUDENTS –  
STUDENT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND  
WELFARE POLICY**  
Covers: **ALL INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

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## Younger Overseas Students – Students Living Arrangements and Welfare Policy and Procedure

This policy relates not only to all students for whom St Michael's Collegiate School has issued a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) letter, but also for all students residing in any home stay environment at all, even where a parent holds a guardianship visa. Regular visits to the homes where students are being cared under a parent holding a guardianship visa are also conducted (under the home stay inspections procedure) to ensure that the guardian visa holder is in fact still in the country and still directly caring for the child.

For students being issued a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) letter by St Michael's Collegiate School, the CAAW will note the beginning and end dates of the period for which the school is willing to undertake responsibility for approving accommodation, support and welfare arrangements for students under 18 years old. The end date will be the length of the eCOE plus seven days. This is created and noted within PRISMS in preparing this CAAW. Should a non-approval of welfare need to be noted by the School, this will also be undertaken via PRISMS. Should a student change her living arrangements or the School no longer wish to continue its approved welfare arrangements, DIAC will be advised via PRISMS.

For multiple courses held by St Michael's Collegiate School, there is a 'no gap' policy for welfare and accommodation arrangements although students are expected to return home during Christmas holiday period. See holidays. The 'no gap' period also relates to any prior course with any other provider being undertaken by the student before entering into St Michael's Collegiate School. Collegiate will only provide welfare and accommodation from the beginning date noted in the CAAW. Students and parents are reminded of this and this is also noted within the Offer of Place and Written Agreement issued and accepted by the parents.

Should a student's enrolment be terminated, suspended, deferred or cancelled, Collegiate will check that suitability of arrangements for the student are continued until:

- The student is accepted by another provider and that registered provider takes over responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements (Collegiate liaises to ensure continuity and the 'no-gap' policy);
- The student leaves Australia;
- Other suitable arrangements are made that satisfy the Migration regulations (example: the student changes from student visa to permanent resident status – in which case evidence is required);

- Collegiate reports via PRISMS that it can no longer approve the arrangements for the student (examples: where a student or parent is **refusing** to comply to Collegiate's welfare and care policies, school or boarding house rules - or to provide 'working with children check clearance'). Collegiate will however ensure that the student remains under welfare provision until such time of confirmation that the student has left the school and returned home (flight details are checked) or the student changes to be under the welfare/care of another provider as per points above. Collegiate understands that in reporting under 'Non-Approval of Appropriate Accommodation/Welfare Arrangements' letter, that Collegiate is in fact reporting a 'breach of student condition 8532' and the report is likely to result in cancellation of the student's visa.
- Collegiate will ensure that for any incoming or outgoing student that a physical handover occurs to ensure the student is not at risk of continued supervision and welfare arrangements during the transfer to another school or should the student have been required to depart from St Michael's Collegiate School for reasons of deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment.

In the event a student has gone missing from approved accommodation and cannot be contacted the school's Critical Incident Plan Policy will be activated. Parents are contacted, police/children's services advised where applicable and should the student not be found, Collegiate will report the student's breach of Visa condition 8532 to DIBP via PRISMS via 'Non-Approval' as above.

For purposes of safety and duty of care St Michael's Collegiate School' enrolment policy requires that visa students in Years K to 6 should have one of their parents residing in Hobart to supervise and be responsible for them as boarding, for overseas students, is not permitted until Year 7. Students from Years K to 6 are only enrolled at the discretion of the Principal and in special circumstances.

Students must be enrolled as boarding students and remain in boarding for the duration of her studies at St Michael's Collegiate School, unless living with a parent or direct family relative in Hobart. This is to ensure students are safe and properly cared for and to provide suitable conditions for study.

Collegiate does not work with or provide home stay accommodation during the school term through an external provider. It should be noted full boarding is the only enrolment option available to overseas students (where the parents reside outside Australia) unless approved by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.

The exceptions are, when legally binding arrangements exist, the School **may** agree to allow an alternative arrangement whereby the student resides with a direct family member over the age of 21 years.

All persons, providing residential care, persons supervising students for any holiday activities, and/or all persons residing at a residence (18 years or older) or participating in supervision of any Collegiate enrolled student must undertake a 'working with children' check and provide to the school evidence of clearance certification.

Students in Collegiate's boarding house are accommodated in share-style rooms until senior years of 11 and 12 (unless space permits for lower years) and where possible single rooms are then allocated. Please refer to the Boarding House handbook and the Boarding Portal, made available at enrolment orientation and for all current students and families on Collegiate's website Portals.

The School's catering service endeavours to provide a familiar diet for girls from other countries, whilst also catering for some specific dietary requirements.

All St Michael's Collegiate School' staff, including all full and part time staff employed in the Boarding House are required to hold suitable check certificates ('working with children') as required under New South Wales law or as required by St Michael's Collegiate School or other authorities, for determining they meet the criteria required to work with children and to meet the requirements of the school and other governing bodies.

International students at Collegiate enjoy a focused and purposeful learning environment in a Christian context. Every student is encouraged to engage in the balanced and holistic education programs offered within its safe, encouraging and supportive environment.

This focus along with the School's Duty of Care could be compromised if international boarders were permitted to spend significant time off campus involved in activities other than those for which they have enrolled.

It is therefore policy that a girl does not engage in part time or casual employment whilst they are enrolled at St Michael's Collegiate School unless specific approval has been provided by Principal and in agreement with Director of Boarding.

This policy is in place to ensure that the student's welfare is not compromised by outside pressures –and that the student is able to focus her energies on her academic studies and extra-curricular school based commitments. A student's academic progress is a condition of maintaining their student visa.

#### Guardian Requirements

The wellbeing of our students is paramount, Collegiate therefore requires all overseas students not residing within the boarding house to provide guardianship evidence. The Guardian must be at least 21 years of age, be proficient in the English language, a resident of Hobart and must provide the school with a 'working with children check' for themselves and should this person be providing accommodation during school holiday periods or weekend periods, they must also provide a 'working with children check for every member of the household 18 years or over. The nominated guardian arrangement must be maintained for the entire period of enrolment at Collegiate regardless of age. The School will assist in sourcing an appropriate Guardian for a student within a host family arrangement, should the family not have any contacts in Hobart. It is rare that the School would approve a student to reside in a host family situation, outside of holiday periods if a student cannot return home and the boarding house is closed. Students not boarding are residing with families as a rule of the School. Therefore, the need for a nominated guardian is rare, though the School does check the evidence visas of the direct family and insists on WWCC for all those at the home 18 years or over.

### School Holiday and Homestay Arrangements

In vacation periods when the Boarding House is closed, boarders are required to return to their parents, reside with a direct family member over the age of 21 years (this must be approved), or apply for Homestay. St Michael's Collegiate School will require any student wishing to remain in Australia during school holiday periods – and not residing with a direct family member – to have appointed an approved home stay for this period.

All home stay families are checked and audited and have appropriate certification (i.e. Working With Children Certificate clearances). St Michael's Collegiate School insists on this procedure to meet duty of care and legislative requirements for a student under 18 years of age. Collegiate also conducts this same procedure for students 18 or over currently enrolled and Collegiate's enrolment conditions of Offer note that all students, enrolled at the school, regardless of age must abide by all school and boarding house rules and policies until graduation.

St Michael's Collegiate School' Director of Boarding, also the International Student Coordinator, and the Enrolments staff work closely with a home stay family, to ensure all checks are conducted and that a safe environment has been provided. Full contact and address details of home stay families for a student and copies of clearance certificates and appointment documentation are all kept on file.

St Michael's Collegiate School will monitor student/parent/guardian satisfaction with homestay arrangements by questionnaire and require forms and inspection to be completed by the International Student Coordinator at Collegiate with students and host families. Any concerns will be immediately addressed with the home stay family so that an understanding of the need for any improvements can be implemented as necessary under St Michael's Collegiate School' responsibility, duty of care and legislative requirements for a student under 18 years of age and for whom the school is holding welfare provision under student visa conditions.

A 24-hour mobile phone access to a senior St Michael's Collegiate School' staff member is provided to parents and families whilst the student is placed in homestay over the holidays. Any unexpected changes during the homestay placement is managed and approved by St Michael's Collegiate School senior staff in the first instance and followed up by the International Student Coordinator. The nominated 24-hour school holiday contact is: Ms Mika Browning, Director of Boarding/International Student Coordinator – mobile: 0417 262 292 or her nominated staff representative should she be unavailable.

St Michael's Collegiate School is committed to reviewing and renewing its home stay procedures annually.

## Procedures

Students requiring homestay placements for school holiday periods will need to advise the Director of Boarding and have this requirement considered by the Director of Boarding and the International Student Coordinator prior to any home stay being approved. Homestay must be inspected by the International Student Coordinator on a regular basis and no less than 6 months apart.

St Michael's Collegiate School' policy is for girls to return home during July and December holiday breaks. During other minor (Term 1 and Term 3) holiday periods, students must either a) return home; b) be accommodated within the School's boarding house holiday care program, if operating or by a direct family member (this requires approval by the school); or c) have appointed a home stay family through the School if the student is unable to return home and the boarding house is closed. This is in rare circumstances. A home stay request to appoint a home stay, must be coordinated through the International Student Coordinator / Director of Boarding.

Should the student not require a home stay because they are seeking approval to reside for the school holiday period with a direct family member, the student must provide full application details providing all names and contact details for every person 18 years old or over who lives at the address of the holiday intended accommodation. A 'working with children certificate clearance' for each member 18 years old or over who resides at the intended accommodation must be provided to St Michael's Collegiate School (with the exception of direct parent or siblings).

St Michael's Collegiate School will require background information from the girl, family and home stay family – to suitably assist with the matching of the student with an appropriate home stay and to provide details to all involved. St Michael's Collegiate School has a form to be completed for this purpose.

Procedures are outlined below:

- Enquiry with Director of Boarding/ International Student Coordinator
- Director of Boarding to assess, counsel alternative options and to discuss if necessary with Principal.
- If approved (by Principal), the International Student Coordinator will assist with home stay procedure as above and gathering of matching details of student for provision of an appropriate home stay. If student is to reside with a direct family member, all checks of each person in household will be required to be undertaken (as outlined above in this policy);
- The Director of Boarding / International Student Coordinator in liaison with Enrolments team as applicable, confirms home stay arrangement has been booked, and provides Homestay Family Profile and Student's Information to both parties.
- Copies of certificate clearances of checks of completion of a 'working with children check' requirement has been completed and approved as per Tasmanian requirements are obtained for final sign-off and approval;

- Director of Boarding / International Student Coordinator communicates with home stay family in regard to pick up time and location (from boarding house residence) and dates for return to boarding house for re-commencement of school and provides home stay with the emergency school 24-hour contact details - for after-hours emergency or crisis purposes.
- If student has any 'urgency' during their stay they should contact the nominated (24 hours per day home stay 'on call' staff member) of St Michael's Collegiate School as noted on the student's and the home stay's paperwork provided for the period of the home stay provision – and where required, this nominated staff member would contact the Senior Staff Member of St Michael's Collegiate School (24 hours on call) for such crisis situations.
- Student and families to submit a completed questionnaire at conclusion of homestay. St Michael's Collegiate School International Student Coordinator / Director of Boarding to assess, record and action as required. Note that this questionnaire is prepared by Director of Boarding / International Student Coordinator and may vary from term to term – to meet the requirements of the student and the period of the home stay provision and is not a standard questionnaire.
- Principal to be advised of any issues of the home stay provision.