



MERCEDES
COLLEGE

Homestay Family Boarding



COMPASSION LOYALTY JUSTICE INTEGRITY RESPONSIBILITY MUTUAL RESPECT

Homestay Family Boarding

Everything you need to know

Family Boarding enables international students to live within a caring, secure family environment, as individual as they are. Mercedes College recognises that formal institutional style boarding does not necessarily meet the needs of all students and is fortunate to be able to offer a range of Homestay families who are diverse and varied. By having a variety of Homestay families, Mercedes College can be flexible to meet the needs of our students.

Homestay Families

Homestay families provide their international student with a family atmosphere and a caring, supportive environment. Students are accepted as another member of the family and the Homestay family provides for the physical, emotional, and social needs of the student.

Students are offered their own separate bedroom furnished with a bed, desk, study chair, desk light, and wardrobe or drawers. Furnishings such as bed linen, curtains, towels and other items will be clean and in good order. The student will also be provided with the use of living areas including the lounge, kitchen, dining room, bathroom, toilet and laundry.

Homestay parents are responsible for:

- Providing a safe and secure environment where the student is included as part of the family
- Providing full board, including three meals per day and snacks
- Supervising the student's movements
- Assisting with their daily living, including guidance and support for the student's physical, academic, social and emotional development
- Notifying the College before 9:30am via text to 0419 914 398, or attendance@mercedes.catholic.edu.au if their student is to be absent
- Communicating with the Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation regarding any concerns about their student.

Why Become Involved?

There are many reasons why Australian families become involved in the Homestay experience including:

- Learning about other countries and cultures
- Providing new experiences for their own children
- Contributing to the development of young people

International students are encouraged to participate in the social life of the Homestay home, and the educational and cultural life of the school, and to respect the needs of the Homestay parents and the College.

Guardianship

In most circumstances, the Principal of Mercedes College is the care guardian for international students under 18 years of age while they are studying at the College.

On Arrival

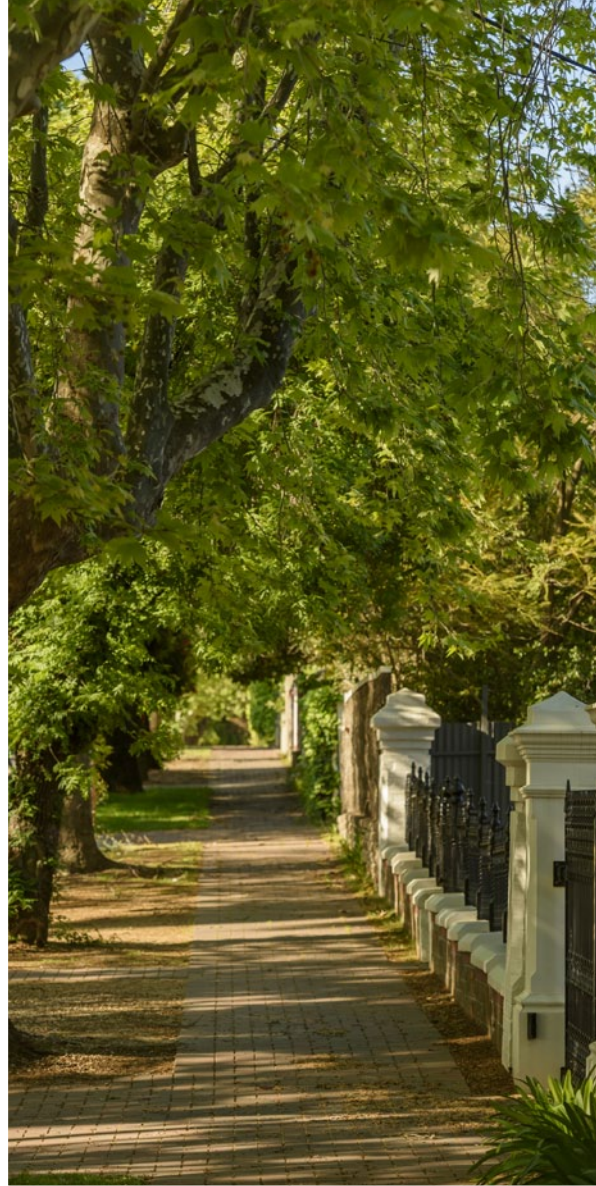
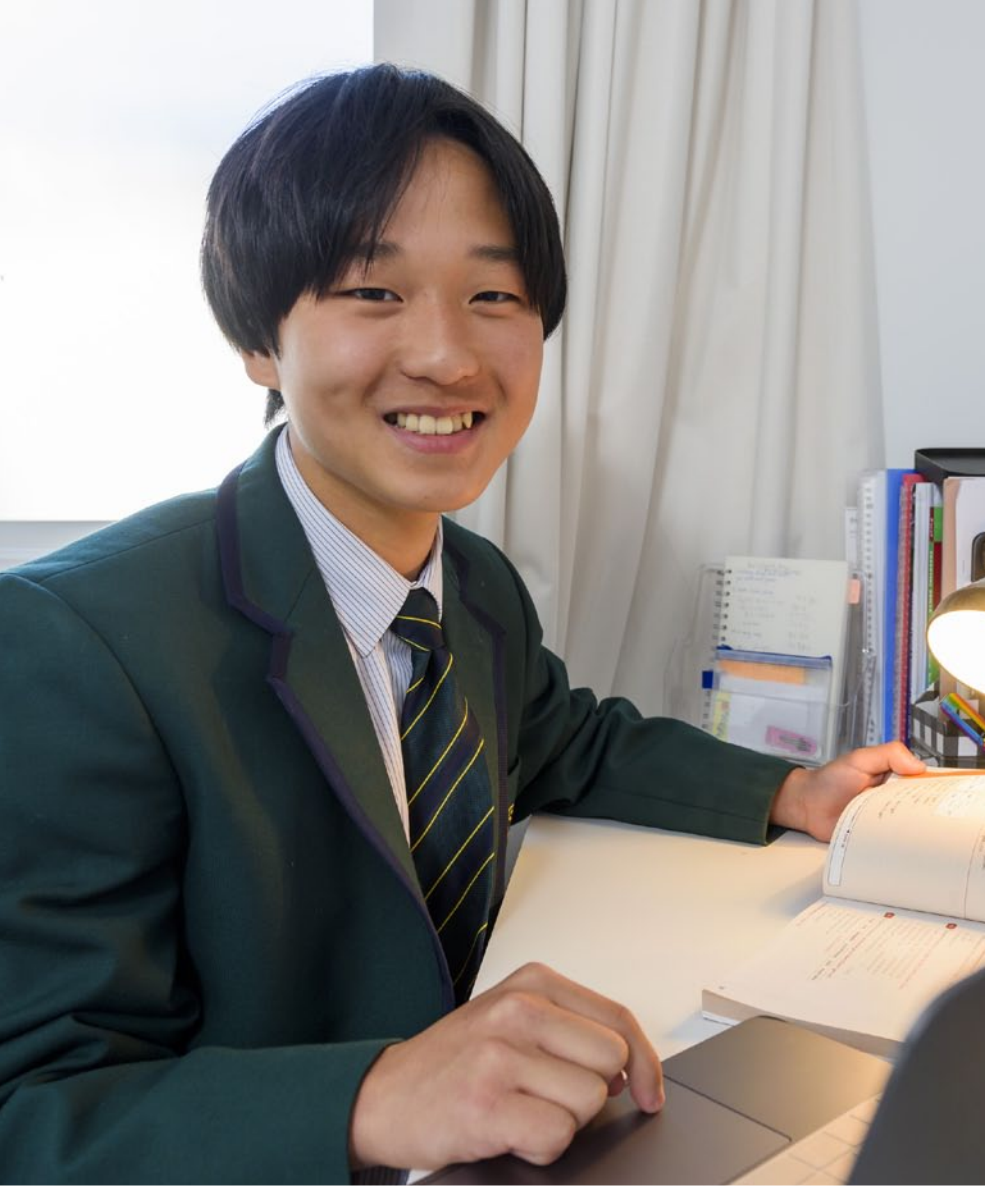
On arrival, Homestay parents are well prepared to welcome the new student into their home. They are informed that the student will be nervous, apprehensive and very tired after travelling for a long time and may be sad about leaving their own country, family and friends.

The Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation will coordinate the welcome and oversee the transfer to the Homestay family.

The student's bedroom will be clean and ready for them to move in on arrival.

Homestay parents will be friendly and helpful and will try to assist the student to adjust to their new environment.

Students must always be friendly and considerate during their stay in Homestay accommodation and make time each day to have conversations with the Homestay parents. Good communication is the key to a happy Homestay home.



Pastoral Care

Australian life may be very different from the student's own country and it will take time for each student to learn a different way of doing things.

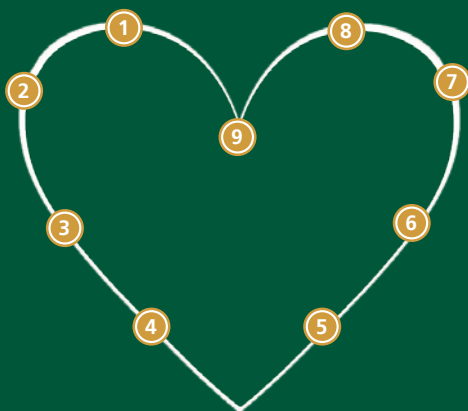
All students will experience a period of adjustment. Students who arrive with a willingness to try new things will find it easier to settle into a new country. Homestay parents guide and support the student throughout their study at the College.

All international students are provided with the contact phone number of the Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation, Mrs Robyn Halliday, on arrival into Adelaide. She can be contacted 24 hours a day should a problem arise.

The Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation will liaise between the overseas family, international student, Homestay parents and Mercedes College to resolve any issues.

The Process of Adjustment

- 1. Leaving home** – farewells. Feeling both happy and sad.
- 2. Arriving in Australia** – feeling both excited and anxious about being in Adelaide and at Mercedes College.
- 3. Adjusting to the Homestay family** – feeling happy and excited, but maybe also confused and tired. Everything is so new.
- 4. Culture shock** – missing your family, being lonely without friends, and experiencing your new school and possibly unusual foods with the Homestay family.
- 5. Feeling uncertain** – wondering did I do the right thing? Will I achieve my goal?
- 6. Adjusting to your new life** – feeling confident, making new friends in Adelaide, enjoying classes at Mercedes College and living with your Homestay family.
- 7. Completion of studies** – achieving your goal at Mercedes College, with a new future ahead. Feeling positive.
- 8. Leaving Australia** – farewells. Feeling sad leaving your Mercedes friends and your Homestay. Anxious about your new life, but happy about seeing family members and old friends.
- 9. Arrival in home country** – getting to know family/friends again, starting tertiary studies and adjusting to your new life back at home - or perhaps you enjoyed life at Mercedes College so much, you decided to continue studying in Australia!



Orientation

Each home has different house rules. Homestay parents will orientate their student to their home and neighbourhood and assist their students with transportation enquiries.

As part of the orientation into Australian life, students are expected to join their Homestay parents in activities and outings.

Shortly after arrival students will begin orientation into the life of the school, their Homestay accommodation and the Australian lifestyle.

Homestay parents will assist their student with:

- Traffic code
- How to travel to and from school
- Buying transport tickets
- Banking details
- Postal details
- Living with a family, including:
 - dietary information and meal times
 - laundry rules and sharing duties
 - expectations using the phone / internet / bathroom

Bathroom

Homestay parents will instruct each student on the way to use the bathroom and how to adjust the hot and cold water.

As the bathroom will usually be shared with other household members, everyone needs to be considerate about the following:

- Showers (short in length)
- Storing toiletry items
- Removal of dirty clothing
- Disposal of waste, especially sanitary products
- Water is to be confined to the shower recess or bath as water spilled on the floor is dangerous to others
- Leave the bathroom clean and tidy.

Students are required to have an understanding that water and power are valuable resources. Turning off lights, heaters and taps is ecologically and financially desirable. Students who are excessive in the use of water and power may be charged for the excess.

Laundry

The Homestay family is responsible for washing bedding, towels and the student's clothing regularly. However, an arrangement with the Homestay parents can be made if the student prefers to wash his or her own clothes.

Transport

The Homestay family will educate the student about the public transport systems in Adelaide and around their home.

Further information is available from Adelaide Metro 1300 311 108 or www.adelaidemetro.com.au

Students are responsible for the cost of all travel and are required to carry their Student Identification (ID) card on the transport system to use secondary student tickets. Metro Smart Card top up credit is available from the College Shop and can also be done instantly at various retailers or online via Adelaide Metro - online recharges must be completed before 9:00pm to be available for use the next day.

When travelling in a car, all passengers are required to wear seatbelts. Homestay parents will insist on this. The penalty imposed on licensed drivers for seat belts not worn is very high.

Telephone and Internet Access

Students are required to carry a charged mobile phone, with credit if using a pre-paid sim card, and their Homestay parents' address at all times.

Homestay families provide internet access, usually via the National Broadband Network (NBN) or ADSL, and may or may not have a landline phone.

While internet access is required for study purposes, Homestay families may implement their own internet restrictions for entertainment outside of study, such as downloading or streaming movies, TV shows and music (Netflix, Spotify, YouTube etc). Students must comply with the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement in the Student Personal Planner.

Meals

All students in Homestay accommodation will have food provided for three meals a day. Breakfast is often self-serve, where everyone helps themselves to toast, breakfast cereal, juice, water etc.

While students are on site at Mercedes, they are provided with microwaves and kettles to heat food. Homestay parents often cook a little extra food for the night meal so students can bring it in the next day.

Some days students will be given sandwiches for their lunch. Australian students have sandwiches as part of their diet. International students will be given the same quality and quantity of food that Homestay parents give to their own family.

Grocery shopping in Australia is generally done on a weekly basis with fresh foods stored in large refrigerators and cupboards in the home. Freezers are used extensively as a way of preserving freshly prepared food. Occasionally Homestay parents will defrost food which has been prepared and frozen at an earlier date and serve it along with other fresh foods for the evening meal.

Snacks are provided by the Homestay parent. Students may also choose to purchase a few of their favourite snacks and confectionery. Students are responsible for the purchase of these.

Home for Meal Time

Homestay families start to prepare the evening meal late in the afternoon. Students must notify their Homestay parents by 4:00pm if they choose to eat a meal out with friends and will not require dinner / an evening meal to be provided that day.

Curfews

Monday to Thursday and Sunday

The student can arrange to meet with their friends in a safe environment, but must be home by 6:00pm.

Friday and Saturday

The student can arrange to meet with their friends in a safe environment and must be home by:

- 14 years old – 8:00pm
- 15 years old – 9:00pm
- 16-17 years old – 9:30pm
- 18 years old and above – 10:00pm

If a student wants to go out they must:

- Ask permission from their Homestay parent before making plans with friends
- Explain to the Homestay family the arrangements and details of the outing e.g. destination and time expected home
- Provide contact details e.g. address and telephone number of their friends
- Telephone the Homestay parents during the outing if arrangements change.

We understand that students may like to have dinner in the city with their friends on weekends. They will need to plan ahead and ensure they are home by their curfew time or plan to share a meal together at lunchtime on Saturday or Sunday.

Students cannot sleep away from the Homestay home without the approval of the Principal.

Homestay parents will ensure that their student is carrying Homestay contact information in case of emergency.

Holiday Absence

During a holiday absence, the student may leave their belongings in the room and be ensured of the availability of the room upon return. A fee will be charged for this.

If the student is away for 7 or more nights, a holding fee will be charged for the room. If the student is away for less than 7 nights, the full board fee is charged as normal.

Homestay General Information

Student Fees

Upon arrival students are required to pay two weeks Homestay fees in advance and a bond. The bond is returned to the student upon leaving if there are no outstanding bills or unacceptable damage to the home.

Homestay fees are inclusive of all meals and snacks.

Extra may be charged for internet usage and students are responsible for all transport costs. Notification of Homestay fee rises will be sent to the student's parents and Homestay family prior to implementation.

Health Cover

Health cover is compulsory for all students on Student Visas. All students will have prepaid private medical Insurance organised by the College. This includes:

- Doctors consultation and treatment fees – up to 85% of the government scheduled fee
- Full cover for **public hospital treatment** if arrival to hospital is through the emergency department and the illness was not pre-existing
- Payment for ambulance costs is only made for travel to hospital and not for on-site treatment by paramedics, which incurs a separate fee.

In the case of an emergency, students will be taken to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department of the hospitals listed below:

Flinders Medical Centre

Flinders University, Bedford Park
P: (08) 8204 5511

Royal Adelaide Hospital

North Terrace, Adelaide
P: (08) 7074 0000

Women's and Children's Hospital

King William Road, North Adelaide
P: (08) 8161 7000

Visas

The Department of Home Affairs issues students who enter Australia with a Student Visa for a period of full-time study. There are strict visa conditions regarding attendance and satisfactory academic achievement. Failure to comply with the conditions of visa can have an effect on a student's enrolment status.

Students are requested to view the website www.homeaffairs.gov.au

Money and Banking

All Mercedes College international students need to open an Australian bank account. It provides the student with easy access to their money, as ATM machines are available in every shopping complex. The Homestay parent can assist the student to open a bank account and instruct the student on how to operate an ATM.

It is NOT advisable for students to carry large amounts of cash into Australia. Australian Customs service officers will expect students to accurately complete the entry cards into Australia. Serious consequences will apply if a student has not given accurate information.

Large amounts of money for school fees and Homestay accommodation should be transferred between countries using the banking systems.

Smoking and Alcohol

Students under 18 years of age are not legally permitted to buy alcohol or cigarettes in Australia. Students must not bring alcohol, cigarettes or illicit drugs into the Homestay home.

Alcohol, cigarettes and drugs are strictly forbidden on school property, at school functions, school activities, and while in school uniform.

Working

College approval must be given before starting work. A form seeking approval is available from the Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation.

Working often conflicts with student's good study habits and College approval will only be given to academically successful students.

Holiday Travel

Students MUST NOT TRAVEL away from their Homestay parents without the consent of the College. If the student requests permission to travel and stay elsewhere, they must:

- Discuss their plans with the Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation
- Provide a letter of authorisation from their parents
- Fill in the Permission to Travel form
- Provide a photocopy of travel tickets.

Students must not book travel tickets without receiving written authorisation from the College. This will ensure students will not make a mistake with their travel bookings.

Leaving Homestay

All international students attending Mercedes College must live in Homestay accommodation until they have completed their studies. It is possible to change Homestay families through the Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation.

Homestay parents must be given two weeks notice before a student leaves.

Students MUST discuss their reasons for wishing to move with the College Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation.

A Request to Move form must be completed and parents of the student will be contacted before any changes of accommodation take place.

Pets

Many Homestay parents will have pets. Homestay parents have been advised to restrain their pets from entering the student's bedroom. If the student has allergies or difficulties with animals notification should be given before arrival.

Homestay Support

If students or Homestay parents need assistance or support at any time, the Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation is available.

Mercedes College has a dedicated Homestay officer who interviews prospective families and ensures that they have the appropriate education and government clearances.

The Australian government has recognised Mercedes College as a leader in offering quality education and welfare support for international students.

Contact details

Mrs Robyn Halliday

International Student Programme Coordinator of Student Welfare and Accommodation

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M: 0403 572 746

E: rhalliday@mercedes.catholic.edu.au





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2021_MC551_V4

