



International Students Accommodation, Welfare and Support Policy

1. Commitment to Child Safety

Camberwell Girls Grammar School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people, their families and their participation. We are committed to providing culturally inclusive environments where all our students are safe and feel safe, and have confidence their voice is heard. We promote positive interactions between students and adults, and between students and their peers based on mutual trust and respect.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Everyone engaged or employed by Camberwell Girls has a role to play in promoting child safety. All are aware of their responsibility to promptly raise issues or concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and we take proactive steps to identify children who may be at risk or experiencing vulnerability to mitigate harm or distress.

Particular attention is given to the safety needs of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities, international students, those unable to live at home and children and young people who identify as LGBTQIA+.

We regularly seek input from students, parents, carers, staff and volunteers in our child safe practices and communicate our policies and ongoing strategies following each systematic review.

2. Purpose

This policy outlines the School's accommodation and welfare arrangements as well as the optional support services available to International Students at Camberwell Girls Grammar School (CGGS). It also details the screening, selection and monitoring procedures the School has in place to verify and validate that the accommodation assigned to the International Student by the School is and remains suitable to their age and needs.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all International students. Where a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) letter has been issued by CGGS it applies to international students living in a homestay arrangement. It also applies to staff involved in the arrangement of accommodation and welfare of International Students during their enrolment at CGGS.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
School	Camberwell Girls Grammar School (Camberwell Girls)
Staff	All staff employed at CGGS.
International Student	Full fee-paying student enrolling on a Student Visa (Subclass 500).



Parents	Parents, guardians, carers.
Support Person	A local person appointed by parents to represent them and care for the student in parents' absence. They are not a legal guardian.
Registered Provider	An Australian educational institution with a CRICOS registration.
Agent	Agents including education agents assisting families with enrolment. They may be located onshore or offshore.
CRICOS	Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- ◆ The **Principal** is responsible for complying with their legal responsibilities in relation to International Students.
- ◆ The **Head of Senior School** is responsible for:
 - ◆ ensuring that the policy is regularly reviewed and remains compliant with the relevant authorities and legislation.
 - ◆ liaising with teaching and professional services staff and the Parents of the International Students to monitor the progress of the International Student, both formally and informally.
 - ◆ contacting Parents if the School can no longer approve the International Student's welfare or there are concerns about the International Student's welfare.
 - ◆ contacting the police or other relevant agencies if the International Student is missing.
- ◆ The **International Student Coordinator** is responsible for:
 - ◆ managing student induction including compliance, safety briefing, public transport information and other support services.
 - ◆ facilitating social groupings of international students so that new students are welcomed into the international community and into the wider CGGS community.
 - ◆ providing a point of contact for parents on matters of concern about current international students.
 - ◆ meeting with Heads of School regarding overall welfare of international students and their academic progress.
 - ◆ meeting with YLCs and/or Heads of School, about International Students of concern and if necessary and in co-operation with the relevant YLC and/or Head of School, contact parents or guardians.
 - ◆ assessing the recommended homestay family and facilities prior to the international student moving into the homestay.
 - ◆ visiting and monitoring the International Student's accommodation, both prior to the accommodation being approved, and at least every 6 months thereafter.
 - ◆ liaising with students, parents and homestay families regarding students' home stay matters and any issues or grievances that arise.
 - ◆ managing the relationship with homestay providers as it applies to student homestay accommodation.
 - ◆ conducting regular meetings as required with International Students to ensure issues and problems are dealt with in a timely manner, especially for new arrivals.
 - ◆ conducting twice yearly meetings with International Students and their Parents.



- ◆ monitoring the performance of the Support Person by completing regular assessments and obtaining feedback from the International Student.

◆ The **Head of Admissions** is responsible for:

- ◆ promoting the International Student Program to prospective International Student and Parents of International Students.
- ◆ providing relevant information to prospective International Student and Parents of International Students.
- ◆ enrolling International Students (as well as local students).
- ◆ issuing Confirmation of Enrolment document through the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).
- ◆ reporting through PRISMS if CGGS is no longer able to take responsibility for the International Student's welfare.
- ◆ assisting the Agent where required with visa and other requirements with the Department of Home Affairs.
- ◆ assisting with arranging accommodation and welfare for International Students (if CAAW arrangement).
- ◆ maintaining policies and procedures for the enrolment of International Students.
- ◆ communicating with third party providers during enrolment process (International Student Alliance and Australian Homestay Network.)

6. Policy Statement

International Students on a student visa will require specific accommodation, welfare arrangements and pastoral care support while studying in Australia.

CGGS requires all International Students (irrespective of age) to live in accommodation and welfare arrangements approved by the School throughout the duration of their enrolment. International Students are not permitted to live on their own.

6.1. Staffing and resources

To ensure the successful integration and academic progress of our International Students, the School is committed to providing comprehensive support and staffing resources to cater for the size of our international student program. Our dedicated team comprises of the Head of Senior School, Head of Middle School, an International Student Coordinator, qualified educators, student support personnel and administrative staff all working collaboratively to foster a nurturing and inclusive learning environment for our diverse student body. Staff also assist with accommodation, welfare and emergency support as required. Careers advice and support is given by the Careers Counsellor and School Counsellors.

The School recognises that International Students may face unique challenges in adjusting to a new educational system and cultural environment. Therefore, our staff undergo specialised training to understand and address the needs of International Students effectively. This includes training on cultural sensitivity, language support, and strategies to promote academic success.

As part of our 360⁰ of Being program, the School offers tailored academic support programs to assist international students in meeting their course requirements and achieving their educational goals. These programs may include additional tutoring, supervised study sessions, English as an Additional Language support classes, personalised intervention strategies, and counselling services to address any academic or personal challenges International Students may encounter.

6.1.1. International Student Coordinator

The International Student Coordinator is appointed by the Principal and reports to the Head of Senior School to oversee the welfare of International Students enrolled at the school. They play a critical role in influencing the quality of the International Student Program and the educational experience of the International Student at CGGS. They are the first point of contact for International Students for academic, personal and welfare matters.

Some matters that may be referred to the International Student Coordinator may include but is not limited to the following:

- ◆ Guidance on who to see or talk to on a personal matter.
- ◆ Difficulties settling into a new environment.
- ◆ Unexpected problems or emergencies.
- ◆ Academic issues.
- ◆ Family issues back home.
- ◆ Housing or financial issues.
- ◆ Reporting instances of harassment or discrimination.

6.2. Welfare Arrangements

It is a condition of enrolment at CGGS that each International Student has a school approved welfare arrangement for the duration of their enrolment. Prior to a Confirmation of Enrolment being issued by the School, Parents must complete and return to the Admissions Office a Welfare Nomination Letter.

Parents of International Students can choose one of the following welfare arrangement options:

- ◆ to apply for a Guardian visa and personally reside in Melbourne with their child, or
- ◆ to nominate an eligible relative who lives in Melbourne as the child's Support Person.

Any payment arrangements are independently made between the Parents and the eligible relative.

In the event that options (1) and (2) are not available, parents may choose to apply for a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) arrangement with the School. In this instance, the School will issue a CAAW Letter signed by the Principal. The parents select, agree to and pay for the Support Service provided by the School approved commercial agency (ISA). The appointment of the ISA Support Person for the International Student must be approved by the School.

Parents should note that under this arrangement:

- ◆ the support service provided by the commercial agency is not 'guardianship' and that the agency providing the service has no responsibility for their child's accommodation or welfare.
- ◆ the paid support service is additional to, and not in place of, the support and counselling the School normally provides to all students. CGGS does not delegate, outsource or contract out that responsibility.
- ◆ CGGS is not taking over the legal responsibility of the child. This responsibility remains with the Parents at all times.

Refer to **Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW)** section for further details.

6.2.1. International Student Alliance (ISA) Student Care & Support Services

CGGS currently engages the services of International Student Alliance (ISA) to provide additional independent student care and support services for International Students. There is a Co-Operation and Service Agreement between ISA and CGGS and a Service Agreement between ISA and the Parents of the International Student. ISA invoices the Parents directly for this optional service. The appointment of ISA for the International Student must be approved by the School.



ISA's role is to work collaboratively with the School and the Parents to provide independent support and advice to the International Students and Parents (as required). ISA is not the legal guardian of the International Student. All ISA staff associated with CGGS undergo a vigorous screening process - interviewed, reference checked and must hold a valid Working With Children's Check (WWCC) prior to placement. ISA's 24-hour emergency contact number is +61 3 9663 2887.

6.2.2. Support Person Responsibilities

Some of the responsibilities of the Support Person include but is not limited to:

- ◆ maintaining regular contact with the International Student.
- ◆ liaising with CGGS on behalf of the Parents including signing documents with CGGS on behalf of the Parents.
- ◆ providing local orientation for the International Student including public transport information, emergency services, facilitating opening a bank account, mobile phone services.
- ◆ attending parent teacher interviews and other relevant information sessions.
- ◆ liaising with the CGGS International Student Coordinator to monitor the International Student's health, academic performance and attendance.

For specific details of agreed responsibilities, refer to the Co-Operation and Service Agreement between ISA and CGGS and the Service Agreement between ISA and the Parents of the International Student. Parents are encouraged to seek professional advice and become fully aware of the agreed services provided by ISA before signing the Service Agreement.

6.2.3. Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW)

A CAAW letter issued through PRISMS acknowledges to the family that the school approves the arrangements for the international student's accommodation, support and general welfare. This only applies to international students under 18 years of age. The CAAW letter does not mean that CGGS takes over the legal responsibility for the international student but rather approves the welfare arrangements for the international student. Legal responsibility remains with the parent or person who has custody of the international student. Where CGGS has issued a CAAW letter accepting the responsibility for approving the accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for an international student who is under the age of 18, it will not delegate, outsource or contract out that responsibility. As part of the CAAW arrangement, the School monitors the International Student's accommodation:

- ◆ prior to the accommodation being approved, and
- ◆ at least every 6 months thereafter.

This process includes a physical site visit, and may involve a student interview, a student survey or any other means conducted by the International Student Coordinator to ensure that the accommodation still meets the International Student's age and needs.

If an International Student under the age of 18 and currently on a CAAW arrangement with CGGS is transferred to another school, the receiving school must ensure that there is no gap in welfare arrangement. This also applies vice versa if an International Student is transferred into CGGS under an existing CAAW arrangement from another school. In this instance, it is the responsibility of CGGS to ensure that there is no gap in welfare arrangement.

All CAAW arrangement ceases once the International Student turns 18. However, it is an enrolment requirement of CGGS that the International Student continues to reside in School approved accommodation and maintains the services of ISA until the completion of their course.

The minimum CAAW period must start seven days prior to the length of the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), plus seven days at the end of the (CoE) or until the student turns 18.



6.2.4. Eligible Relatives

Parents may opt to have their child reside with an eligible relative in Melbourne subject to the following criteria:

- ◆ an eligible relative such as an adult brother or sister, grandparent, aunt or uncle.
- ◆ over 21 years of age.
- ◆ to be of good character.
- ◆ English speaking resident of Australia for the duration of the International Student's enrolment.
- ◆ to reside in Melbourne.
- ◆ welfare arrangement to be approved by Parents and the School via interview with the Head of Senior School / International Student Coordinator.
- ◆ eligible relative to provide all contact details & address and advise the School immediately of any updates.
- ◆ to provide documentary evidence as listed below:

6.2.5. Documentary Evidence to be provided

- ◆ Eligible relationship to be substantiated by providing documentary evidence of relationship to student.
- ◆ Working with Children's Check (WWCC).
- ◆ Driver's Licence.
- ◆ Australian citizenship document or Passport & Australian Residency Visa Grant Letter.
- ◆ Documentary evidence from the Parent appointing the eligible relative as support person.
- ◆ Documentary evidence from the eligible relative accepting the responsibility as support person.

6.2.6. Responsibilities of the Eligible Relative

- ◆ International Student to reside with eligible relative.
- ◆ Undertake all duties deemed necessary for the wellbeing of the International Student.
- ◆ Being readily available to discuss matters with the school concerning International Student welfare.
- ◆ Report to Parents on regular basis.
- ◆ Attend Information Evenings, Parent Conversation Meetings & Events.
- ◆ Sign official documents as required by the School with the input of Parents.
- ◆ Collect International Student from the school's Health Centre as required.
- ◆ Seek medical attention when required.
- ◆ Ensure that the International Student adheres to the school policies.
- ◆ Ensure appropriate transportation to and from school.
- ◆ Responsible for the International Student during school holidays.
- ◆ Ensure that the International Student's holiday travel arrangements are within the school holiday dates.
- ◆ Oversee the International Student's travel during school holidays.

6.3. Accommodation Arrangements

6.3.1. Homestay Accommodation

Homestay is an accommodation option for International Students who come to study at CGGS from Year 10, unaccompanied by a Parent and do not have suitable living arrangements with an eligible relative in Melbourne. In this instance, Parents may opt to have their child reside at a School approved homestay provider.



School approved homestay accommodation is arranged through Australian Homestay Network Pty Ltd (AHN) (independent company). AHN has a network of homes near the school which offer full board in private residences for International Students. All private homestay arrangements provided by AHN have been screened by AHN and verified by the School. All homestay providers are interviewed, assessed, inspected, reference-checked and must hold a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) prior to any placement. Homestay is available for International Students 14 years and over (under VRQA guidelines, the minimum age is 13). Once approved, the School regularly monitors the homestay arrangement by making visits to the home (at least every 6 months), conducting spot checks and regularly communicating with the homestay family and International Students.

Under the homestay arrangement, the School requires the International Student to receive support services in addition to the support and counselling normally provided by the School. This comes in the form of support services provided by an independent student care provider. The support service provider and homestay provider may not be the same person. Refer to Welfare Arrangement section for further details.

Where the School uses a third party to source Hosts, the process prescribed under this Policy will still be followed by the School to assess the Host, regardless of the third party's process or recommendation. The use of a third party is purely to connect the School with potential Hosts and does not represent any effort to delegate the School's responsibility for the International Student's accommodation, welfare or support. All third-party providers need to provide Child Safe documentation and WWCCs. These records are recorded and kept up to date.

An International Student may choose to opt out of their homestay arrangement by living with a Parent or School approved eligible relative. An eligible relative may include an adult brother or sister, grandparent, aunt or uncle.

6.4. Child Safety

International Students may take up accommodation or welfare arrangements that are significantly different to local students. They may take on a welfare or homestay arrangement that involves them living away from their Parents and residing with adults that are not familiar to them. Therefore, CGGS has specific screening requirements in place to protect the safety of International Students and ensure that all Support Persons (other than Parents) and/or homestay providers are interviewed, assessed, inspected and reference checked to verify good character prior to taking on an International Student as well as on an ad hoc basis thereafter (at least every 6 months).

6.4.1. Working with Children Check Requirement (WWCC)

Due to the welfare and/or possible homestay arrangements, the following parties are required to hold a valid Working With Children Check card prior to taking on the responsibility of any International Student studying at CGGS:

- ◆ All members of the homestay family over 18 years of age.
- ◆ All eligible relatives nominated by the Parents.
- ◆ All support services staff assigned by ISA Student Care & Support Services.

A WWCC exemption applies if an International Student resides with their own family under a Guardian visa.

6.5. Selection

6.5.1. Third Party Providers

The School has screened and selected the following third-party providers to provide accommodation and support services for its International Students:

- ◆ Australian Homestay Network Pty Ltd (AHN) to provide homestay accommodation services.
- ◆ International Student Alliance (ISA) to provide additional independent student support services.

These organisations were selected based on their expertise in supporting International Students and Service Agreements are in place.



6.5.2. Host Families

Nominated host families are ultimately selected by the School once they have passed the School's screening process.

6.5.3. Support Person

Nominated support person(s) are ultimately selected by the School once they have passed the School's screening process.

6.6. Screening

6.6.1. Third Party Providers

All third-party homestay and support service providers are screened prior to being selected by the School. Prior to signing any service agreement, a face-to-face meeting with the third party provider is held so the School can verify that the third party provider is operationally compliant in providing homestay accommodation and support services to International Students by having adequate policies and procedures in place to screen, select and monitor its host families, support persons as well as its own staff to ensure that child safe standards in accordance with Ministerial Order no. 1359 are adhered to. A reference check must be completed prior to drafting a service agreement.

Service agreements are prepared by the School's solicitor and provided to the third party provider to sign.

6.6.2. Host Families

All host families recommended by the homestay service provider are initially screened by the provider in accordance with their policies and procedures and verified by the School. Prior to any placement, the School conducts its independent screening of the host family by:

- ◆ Organising a home inspection and interview with the host family.
- ◆ Verifying that all adult occupants hold valid and clear working with children and police check requirements.
- ◆ Assessing the suitability of the host family and accommodation arrangement by completing the Performance Checklist – Host Family available on the School's Policy Management System.

6.6.3. Support Person

All Support Persons recommended by the support service provider are initially screened by the provider in accordance with their policies and procedures and verified by the school. Prior to any placement, the School conducts its independent screening of the Support Person by:

- ◆ for all new support persons, organising an initial screening interview with the support person at the School.
- ◆ for all current support persons, reviewing the support person's performance review files held at the School.
- ◆ verifying that the support person holds a valid and clear working with children and police check requirements.
- ◆ assessing the suitability of the support person by completing the Performance Checklist – Support Person available on the School's Policy Management System.

6.7. Monitoring

6.7.1. Third Party Providers

The International Student Coordinator monitors the performance of the third-party providers to ensure that they continue to provide services in compliance with the service agreement by completing the Performance Checklist form for the relevant provider every 6 months. These forms are available on the School's Policy Management System. The completed assessment forms are filed with the International Student Coordinator. Any areas of non-compliance or improvement are discussed with the third-party provider.

The School may also request feedback from Parents of the International Student concerning their interaction with the third-party providers. Parent feedback forms are available on the School's Policy Management System. It is another monitoring tool that the School may use to ensure that third party providers continue to act professionally and ethically when interacting with parents of the school.

6.7.2. Host Families

The International Student Coordinator conducts home visits every 6 months to ensure that the host family and accommodation remains suitable to the International Student's age and needs. At the home visit, the International Student Coordinator completes an assessment form assessing the continued suitability of the homestay arrangement. They also obtain feedback from the International Student that resides at the homestay home or from the International Students' parents. These assessment forms are available on the School's Policy Management System. All completed assessment and feedback forms are stored in the relevant student files. The School will raise any areas of non-compliance or improvement directly with the host family or via the homestay service provider, depending on the nature of the concern.

6.7.3. Support Person

The International Student Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the performance of the Support Person by completing their own regular assessment and obtaining feedback from the International Student. These assessment forms are available on the School's Policy Management System. All completed assessment and feedback forms are stored in the relevant student and Support Person files. The School will raise any areas of non-compliance or improvement directly with the Support Person or via the support service provider, depending on the nature of the concern.

6.8. Support Services and Pastoral Care

CGGS provides a wide range of support for International Students via staff support and internal services.

6.8.1. Pastoral Care

CGGS has a Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Team that works closely with each family to ensure that their child's transition to schooling in Australia is enjoyable and as smooth as possible, and that it remains this way throughout the duration of their studies at the School.

The School has two School Counsellors and a Chaplain.

6.8.2. Careers and Course Advice

Careers advice and support is given by the Careers Coordinator and School Counsellors.



6.8.3. English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The EAL staff are responsible for testing International Students on arrival to ascertain current English levels and ensure that English proficiency meets the minimum requirements as set out in the EAL Assessment Policy. Refer to policy document on the School's Policy Management System for further details.

6.8.4. Academic Support

Should an International Student need extra assistance with academic matters, either the International Student or the International Student Coordinator will arrange extra assistance from the class teacher outside of class time.

6.8.5. Health Matters

The International Student Coordinator or Support Person may assist International Students to make medical, dental or other health related appointments.

For minor illnesses during the school day, the International Student may refer to the School Nurse on site at the Senior School campus. The School Nurse may assist with access to further medical treatment if required.

6.8.6. Translation and Interpreting Services

The school may arrange for translation and interpreting services for an International Student at either staff or student request. For general matters, several of the staff speak languages other than English and may assist students, staff and families.

Eligible relatives and support service providers may also assist with interpreting.

6.8.7. Legal or Complaint Services

Should an International Student require or request legal assistance, the School will refer the student to the Victorian Legal Aid, which is a free legal service.

Should an International Student wish to make a complaint regarding the outcome of a decision or action of their education provider following the internal complaints and appeals process, the School will refer the student to the Overseas Students Ombudsman, which is a free service.



7. Related Documents

- ◆ International Students Marketing Policy
- ◆ International Students Recruitment and Enrolment Policy
- ◆ International Students Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- ◆ International Students Refund Policy
- ◆ International Students EAL Assessment Policy
- ◆ International Students Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan
- ◆ International Students Student Transfer Policy
- ◆ International Students Course Progress and Attendance Policy
- ◆ International Students Behaviour Management Policy
- ◆ International Students Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy
- ◆ International Students Complaints and Appeals Policy
- ◆ International Students CRICOS Registration Policy
- ◆ Child Safety Code of Conduct
- ◆ Student Code of Conduct – Secondary School
- ◆ Parent Code of Conduct

8. Legislative Context

- ◆ Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
- ◆ National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (National Code 2018)
- ◆ Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Framework
- ◆ Tuition Protection Service (TPS)

9. Governance

9.1. Document Details

Document Details	
Title	International Students Accommodation, Welfare and Support Policy
Policy Approver	Principal
Date Approved	May 2024
Policy Owner	Head of Senior School
Date Created	May 2024
Review Timeline	Every 2 years
Date of Next Review	May 2026



9.2. Version Control

Version	Date	Description
1.0	15.05.2018	Initial version
2.0	12.11.2018	Added Definitions section Amended Guardianship Arrangement section to comply with VRQA Replaced DIBP with Department of Home Affairs
3.0	15.05.2019	Replaced all reference to Bellcare with AHN (newly appointed homestay service provider) Updated ISA Guardian & Welfare Services to ISA Student Care & Support Services
4.0	19.08.2019	Expanded on 'Purpose and Scope' section Added 'Screening' section Added 'Selecting' section Added 'Monitoring' section
5.0	May 2022	New Policy Template. Carry forward as part of review cycle
6.0	May 2024	New Policy Template. Added Definition section. Carry forward as part of review cycle
6.1	August 2024	Added CAAW covers seven days prior to CoE.

9.3. Audience

Audience	Publication Location
Internal Camberwell Girls Grammar School	myCGGS