

SIENA COLLEGE CAMBERWELL YOUNGER INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ACCOMMODATION ARRANGEMENTS POLICY



SIENA
COLLEGE
CAMBERWELL

POLICY TITLE: YOUNGER INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ACCOMMODATION ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

DEVELOPED / REVIEWED BY

Policy Committee
Director of Business Services and Advancement
Head of Admissions
Risk and Compliance Manager
Human Resources Manager

REVIEW SUMMARY

Policy to be presented to the Policy Committee for the first time at the May 2024 meeting. Policy to be reviewed in the first twelve months to ensure accuracy to current legislative components.

DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This document was first developed by Director of Business Services and Advancement and the Head of Admissions in 2024.

DEFINITIONS

AHN	Australian Homestay Network
CAAW	Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare
CoE	Confirmation of Enrolment
National Code	National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
PRISMS	Provider Registration and International Student Management System
VRQA	Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority The VRQA is a statutory authority established under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 and is responsible for regulating education and training providers in Victoria
WWCC	Working with Children Check The Working with Children Check is a screening process for assessing or re-assessing people who work with or care for children

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RATIONALE

Standard 5.3.3 of the National Code requires the College to take responsibility under the Migration Regulations 1994 (Cth) for approving the accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for an international student who is under 18 years of age.

The College must have and implement documented processes for verifying that the student's accommodation is appropriate for the student's age and needs:

- prior to the accommodation being approved; and
- at least every six months thereafter.

The VRQA Guidelines for the Enrolment of International Students Aged Under 18 Years requires that before:

- entering an agreement or arrangement for the provision of homestay accommodation to an international student, or
- issuing a CAAW letter to the Department of Home Affairs in circumstances where homestay accommodation will be provided to an international student,

The College must be satisfied, after making all reasonable enquiries, that the student will be at least 13 years of age at the time of commencing the homestay accommodation.

This Guideline does not apply during the period the international student is or will be living:

- in a boarding facility for students which is part of or owned by a registered College
- with a parent or close family relative (aunt, uncle, grandparent or sibling aged over 21 years of age approved as suitable by the Department of Home Affairs) as part of the student's visa approval
- during any period or circumstances exempted by the CEO VRQA.

VRQA Guidelines on Homestay Accommodation for International Students

The requirements outlined in this Policy comply with the VRQA Guidelines for the Enrolment of International Students Aged Under 18 Years that include guidelines relating to the "Minimum age of 13 for enrolment of an international student in homestay accommodation" and "Student accommodation minimum standards".

PRINCIPLES / GUIDING PRINCIPLES

It is the College's policy to assess younger international students' accommodation arrangements through:

- physical site visits
- student interviews

PROCEDURES

Approval of Accommodation

A younger international student's accommodation must be approved by the College prior to the student residing at the accommodation. The student's accommodation must be:

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- suitable to reside in
- a safe, supportive and welcoming environment
- kept clean and tidy
- able to access a shared bathroom or private bathroom
- able to access a form of heating in the winter and a form of cooling in summer
- secure with locks on bedroom and bathroom doors
- child safe with all adult residents holding a valid WWCC card
- appropriately insured

For homestay accommodation to be approved as suitable accommodation for our younger international students to reside in, the College completes the **International Student Welfare and Accommodation Assessment Form**.

It is the College's policy that to be eligible for a homestay arrangement, the international student must be at least 13 years of age at the time of commencing the homestay accommodation.

The College conducts a site visit to inspect the premises where an international student is residing prior to the student's placement, and at least every six months, to verify that it is appropriate for the international student's age and needs. This process also includes consultation with the student about their experience in the accommodation to date.

Homestay Requirements

For homestays to be approved by the College, the homestay host must:

- sign a written agreement with AHN – AHN Host Agreement. This Agreement will be reviewed by the College prior to the Host signing.
- have a safe, secure, private bedroom for the student's sole use that is appropriate to the age and needs of the student with suitable storage space for clothes, personal effects and study materials, and suitable facilities including a desk, a chair and adequate lighting for study purposes
- be clean and have appropriate furnishings suitable for a family and students
- include access to a shared or private bathroom, with reasonable time allowed for showers
- include access to kitchen, living areas, laundry facilities and shared areas of the home
- have some form of heating in winter, if required, and some means of cooling in summer
- provide students with any keys, alarms or passwords required to have free access to the homestay residence.

Additionally, the College must:

- have appropriate processes for recruitment and screening homestay hosts/families
- ensure that all adults residing at any homestay premises have current Working with Children Checks as required by the appropriate state/territory regulatory body

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- provide the homestay host with appropriate information regarding their responsibilities and emergency contact details for both the College and the parents of the student
- have processes to verify that the accommodation is appropriate to the student's age and needs prior to the placement, and at least every six months
- verify the suitability of the homestay accommodation through a site visit (unless the particular homestay has been verified by a site visit in relation to another student in the previous three months)
- conduct assessments of the homestay with access to all areas of the homestay premises for the purposes of checking compliance with the homestay standards required by the College
- ensure that each homestay host has appropriate insurance policy cover for students residing in their home
- ensure that there is regular training for each homestay host
- ensure that there is a 24-hour emergency number that all stakeholders can contact in the event of an emergency
- maintain regular contact with the homestay host, students and College staff as required.

Host Family Requirements

The College requires each homestay host to agree to a number of requirements prior to hosting a younger international student. A homestay host is required to:

- provide a safe and welcoming homestay family environment that will encourage students to experience life as a member of the family and, where suitable, include students in family related activities
- provide an orientation within the family home, the use of facilities and security. This should include household protocols and safety rules about access and the use of shared areas or facilities such as swimming pools, internet, telephone, mealtimes, visitors and appropriate times to return home during the week and on weekends
- orientate students to the local area including public transport and getting to and from the College, the location of the shops, doctors or medical facilities and recreation areas
- ensure that the student is aware of emergency numbers including 000, the location of police stations and Australian laws pertaining to under 18 year olds
- ensure that the student is appropriately supervised at all times throughout the duration of residing in the homestay including:
 - maintaining suitable supervision of students outside of College hours
 - monitoring the student's general welfare including the student's social activities
- attend interviews with College staff at enrolment, parent meetings and as required by the College
- contact the College regarding any student welfare, academic progress and attendance issues
- assist and support the student's attendance at the College and support the completion of homework assignments where required

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- assist the student to access any necessary medical, dental, hospital or other health-related services, including making appointments and, where necessary, accompany the student to those appointments and if required advise the College of any medical issues.

Homestay Host to Notify the College

A homestay host must notify the College at least two weeks in advance, or as soon as practicable, of any change of circumstances, including:

- if the homestay host proposes to materially change the homestay residence in a way that will affect their ability to meet the homestay residence requirements
- if the homestay host is temporarily unable to provide accommodation or suitable supervision for periods of holidays or other periods
- if the homestay host intends to change address or contact details
- if the student fails to reside in their approved address at all times or intends to move.

If an International Student Turns 18

If an international student turns 18 while enrolled at the College, the College's Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare responsibility will cease.

Additionally, the requirements under Standard 5 of the National Code and this policy will no longer apply.

If an international student turns 18 while enrolled in the final period of their course, the College may decide to apply a condition on their enrolment in the course, requiring the international student to continue to reside in the approved accommodation until the completion of the course. This will be made clear in an amended and signed written agreement or enrolment contract.

Record Keeping

The College maintains evidence of compliance with this policy by maintaining records of activities undertaken by the College in accordance with this policy, any written agreements entered into by the College and copies of all CAAW letters. Records will be maintained in accordance with our **International Student Records Management and Retention Policy**.

RESPONSIBILITY

- Principal
- Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy
- International Student Coordinator
- Head of Admissions

RELATED LEGISLATION

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- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth)
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001 (Cth)
- Migration Act 1958 (Cth)

RELATED SIENA COLLEGE POLICIES

- International Student Records Management and Retention Policy.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- International Student Welfare and Accommodation Assessment Form

RISK

In the Committee's deliberations it is important to consider the College's main strategic processes and the identification of associated risks. Some sample questions are included for referral.

Answers are to be documented as part of the policy.

1. **Faith and Catholic Identity.** Identify any risks to Catholic Identity or Dominican charism of the College. How will this policy harm or enhance either?
2. **Reputation.** Identify if there are any reputational risks to the College. How will this policy impact Siena and wider communities?
3. **Financial.** Identify any financial risks to the College. How will this policy impact the financial stability of the College?
4. **Contemporary Learning and Teaching.** Identify any risks to learning and teaching. How will this policy impact the academic performance of the College?
5. **Wellbeing.** Identify any risks to safety and wellbeing. How will this policy impact the mental and physical wellbeing of the College community?
6. **Community Engagement.** Identify any risks to building community engagement. How will this policy impact community relationships?
7. **Governance and Leadership.** Identify any risks to governance and leadership in the College. How will this policy affect the strategic direction of the College?

Do any risks identified above warrant changes to the proposed policy? If so the policy should be referred back to the developer/s.

NEXT REVIEW

May 2025

POLICY LOCATION

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