

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT YOUNGER OVERSEAS STUDENTS**

### **Purpose**

Firbank Grammar School enrolls overseas students under 18 years of age. It is the School's policy to ensure continuous compliance with Commonwealth and state or territory legislation and regulatory requirements, and common law requirements relating to child welfare, child protection and student duty of care requirements as they apply to our overseas students. This policy relates specifically to Standard 5 of the ESOS Act.

### **Scope**

To ensure students have adequate and compliant welfare arrangements Firbank has developed policies and procedures that are provided to parents, agents and advocates prior to formal enrolment.

The application of this policy is the responsibility of:

1. Principal
2. Admissions Department
3. International Operations Department
4. Head of Campus
5. Head of Boarding
6. School staff

### **Students under the age of 13 in Homestay**

The minimum age for homestay arrangements is 13 years of age at the time of commencing in homestay. The School will make all reasonable enquiries to confirm the age of the student prior to the acceptance of enrolment and the sourcing of accommodation.

Firbank will only accept students under the age of 13 if they are accommodated in:

- the Schools registered Boarding House
- living with a parent or close family relative (aunt, uncle, grandparent or sibling) over the age of 21 as stated as part of the Visa approval.
- during any period or circumstance exempted by the CEO VRQA



## AGE AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE INFORMATION

The School must ensure that overseas students under 18 years of age are given age- and-culturally appropriate information on:

- who to contact in emergency situations, including contact numbers of a nominated staff member and/or service provider to the school.
- seeking assistance and reporting any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse.

The emergency contact information, as well as information on how to seek assistance and report any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse, is provided to our overseas students in an age and culturally appropriate way in our:

- Induction sessions
- information packages given to all students on arrival as part of the induction process.
- individual meetings with the International Student co-ordinator and/or Head of Boarding

## STUDENT SAFETY CARDS

Firbank provides overseas students under 18 with a Student Safety Card which includes:

- for any student on a CAAW letter in homestay accommodation, the homestay accommodation host's address, home telephone number and mobile numbers
- Firbank's details, including 24/7 contact details.
- general emergency contact information
- a statement that Firbank Grammar School is regulated by [the Victorian Regulations and Qualifications Authority \(VRQA\)](#).
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## STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

Where the School takes responsibility under the Migration Regulations for approving the accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements for a student who is under 18 years of age, the School:

- nominates the dates for which the School accepts responsibility for approving accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements and advises the Department of Home Affairs of the dates in the form required.
- ensures any adults involved in, or providing, accommodation and welfare arrangements to the student have appropriate.
- Working with Children Check clearances in accordance with Firbank's Child Protection and Safety policy.



- implements documented processes for verifying that the student's accommodation is appropriate to the student's age and needs, in accordance with our Younger Overseas Students - Accommodation Policy.
- Includes, as part of the School's Overseas Students Critical Incident Response Policy, a process for managing emergency and when welfare arrangements are disrupted for students under 18 years of age.
- maintains up to date records of the student's contact details, including the contact details of the parent(s), guardians(s), or any approved adult responsible for the student's welfare
- advises the Department of Home Affairs, in the form required by the department.
  - As soon as practicable if the student will be cared for by a parent or nominated relative approved by the Department of Home Affairs and a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) is no longer required.
- within 24 hours if the School is no longer able to approve the students' welfare arrangement
- has documented policies and processes for selecting, screening and monitoring any third parties engaged by the School to organise and assess welfare and accommodation arrangements.

## **Compliance with Child Safety Standards and Ministerial Order 1359**

For all students that have been issued a CAAW letter, Firbank must ensure that all adults who provide overseas student accommodation or welfare arrangements or work in our Boarding House must provide the following:

- Working with Children Checks for all persons over the age of 18 years
- proof of personal identity
- the providers history of work involving children
- references that address the employee's suitability for the job and working with children

The School also that staff attend twice yearly briefings relating to child safety and wellbeing and annual training involving:

- Understanding and acknowledging Firbank's
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing Complaints and Concerns Procedures
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Obligations Policy

- Complete the [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting training via the Information Sharing and MARAM online learning system](#).
- Provide evidence of completion needs to Firbank.

## Firbank Boarding House

Students under the age of 18 on a CAAW can elect to live in Firbank's Boarding accommodation. Facilities and accommodation at the Boarding House will be assessed and monitored in the same way as homestay accommodation.

After School hours, students in the Boarding House are always supervised. There is always minimum of 2 supervisors on overnight and on weekends.

The Boarding House is managed by the:

- Head of Boarding
- Deputy Head of Boarding

Support staff include:

- Health Centre Manager
- School Psychologist
- Supervisors

## Welfare Arrangements

All welfare arrangements are approved by the department of Home Affairs

If an overseas student enrolled at the School is under the age of 18, a parent, legal guardian or eligible relative can be nominated to take responsibility for the overseas student's accommodation and welfare arrangements.

The parent, legal guardian, or eligible relative must have an appropriate visa or have applied for a Student Guardian visa (subclass 590).

An eligible relative can be:

- a parent, spouse, de facto partner, brother, sister, stepparent, stepbrother, stepsister, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew, or step-grandparent, step-aunt, step-uncle, step niece or step-nephew; and
- nominated by the parent of the applicant or a person who has custody of the applicant, and must be:



- aged at least 21; and
- of good character, and shows this by providing Police clearance from the countries in which they have lived for more than 12 months in the past 10 years after the age of 16; and
- an Australian citizen, permanent resident or is eligible to remain in Australia until the overseas student's visa expires or the overseas student turns 18 years of age (whichever happens first).

The School is not obliged to follow up where a nominated guardian has been approved by the Department of Home Affairs. However, the School will contact the Department of Home Affairs and the Victorian Registration Qualifications Authority (VRQA) if they become aware that the overseas student is not being appropriately cared for.

## **Responsibilities of Firbank**

Students for whom the School provides a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare Letter (CAAW) remain the responsibility of the School for the duration of the period on the CAAW letter.

Changes to students' accommodation are managed by Firbank's International Student Co-ordinator. Evidence that the parents are aware of a proposed change is required. If a student does not comply, they are in breach of student visa condition 8532 and their visa may be subject to cancellation.

Firbank will ensure that the students are given age and culturally appropriate information on who to contact in the School if they are unhappy with their accommodation arrangements.

Homestay accommodation will be checked thoroughly prior to the accommodation being approved and at least every 6 months after that. Firbank will advise immigration, and the student's parents and local support person of any changes made to the care arrangements for students within 24 hours or sooner.

In the case of a critical incident the responsible adult/s will contact the police and/or other State and Commonwealth agencies as appropriate.

### **Suspension or Cancellation of Student Enrolment**

If Firbank suspends or cancels the enrolment of an underage student, it must continue to check the suitability of arrangements for that student until:

1. The student is accepted by another registered provider and that provider takes over responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements.



2. The student leaves Australia
3. Other suitable arrangements are made that satisfy the Migration Regulations or
4. the Registered provider reports that it can no longer approve of the arrangements for the student.





## Legislation

Link to DHA Under 18 requirements:

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/supporting/Pages/skilled/documents-for-dependents-under-18.aspx>

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud/more/welfare-arrangements-under18>

Consent to grant an Australian visa to a child under the age of 18 years form:

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Forms/Documents/1229.pdf>

## Roles and Responsibilities

- The School Board is responsible for adopting this policy.
- The Principal is responsible for the implementation of the policy.
- Head of Boarding and Boarding House staff are responsible for the welfare of and safety of international boarders.
- The Admissions Manager is responsible for entering student data on PRISMS and issuing CAAW letters.
- The International Student Co-ordinator is responsible for overseeing compliance with accommodation of international students and their welfare arrangements.
- All members of the School community are responsible for compliance with Child Safe Standards and assigned training.

## Related Policies and Documents

- Homestay Host Agreement
- Homestay Accommodation checklist
- International Student Homestay Feedback form
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Obligations Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Complaints and Concerns Policy
- Four Critical Actions for Schools
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Risk Register
- Records Management Policy and Procedure
- Recruitment Policy
- Working with Children Check Policy



## Approval

Policy Issue date	April 2024
Document updated by	International Operations Department
Document reviewed by	Director of International Operations
Document approved/endorsed by	Principal
Endorsed date	May 2024
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