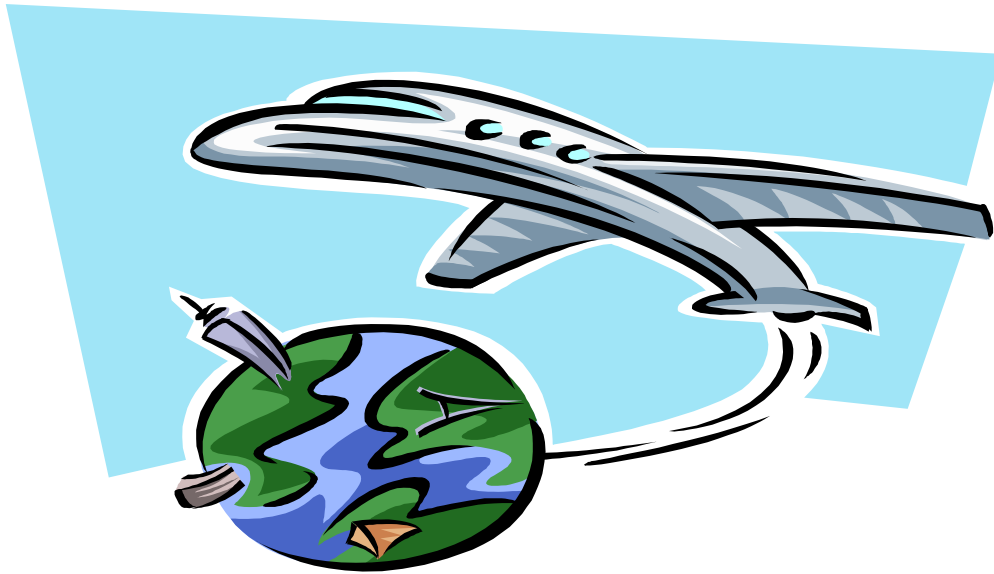


# GORE HIGH SCHOOL



# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION BOOKLET

**GORE HIGH SCHOOL**  
**A successful year in New Zealand**

You will now start on a wonderful year of International Exchange. It will be one of the greatest events in your life if you allow it to be – different from anything else you have experienced. New Zealand is a wonderful country, each area has something different to offer and no two families are the same. Remember a year of wonderful experiences is a head of you and your attitude means everything.

**Think Positive**

The most important thing to remember is that this is a school year in which you will be living with a family and at the School Hostel, and is not simply a travel arrangement for you.

You can always travel, but to live with a New Zealand family and become a real part of a New Zealand community is something unique.

**LIFE IN NEW ZEALAND**

**Climate**

Term One	Summer/Autumn	Term Two	Autumn/Winter
Term Three	Winter/Spring	Term Four	Spring/Summer

The climate in Gore and Southland can be very changeable. In the winter our weather can be cold with frosts and sometimes snow. In the summer it can get hot and it stays light until 9 pm.

A day may start hot and sunny and finish cold and raining.

**Currency**

New Zealand unit of currency are the dollar (\$) and cents (c). The system of currency is \$1 = 100 c.

Denomination of paper notes: \$100 - red, \$50 - purple, \$20 -green, \$10 - blue, \$5 - orange.

Denomination of coins: \$2 - large gold, \$1 - small gold, 50c - largest silver, 20c - silver, 10c - silver, 5c - silver.

**Bargaining and Prices**

There is little bargaining in New Zealand. Prices of goods for sale are fixed - sometimes by the Government.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) is a standard tax of 12.5% on all goods bought and all services received e.g. haircuts. Some goods will be marked with both prices, or shops will have notices saying whether prices shown include GST or not. Generally, most things have GST included.

**Holidays**

Most New Zealanders have three to four weeks holidays from their paid employment. This time is usually over the December/January period. Many

New Zealanders travel to other parts of the country with their families in their annual holidays. Camping, and staying in small cabins at the beach are also popular.

Below are public holidays observed by most New Zealanders. Banks and businesses close on these days too.

☺	New Year	January 1 & 2
☺	Waitangi Day	February 6
☺	Good Friday, Easter Monday & Easter Tuesday	March or April
☺	Anzac Day	April 25(remembrance)
☺	Queens Birthday	First Monday in June
☺	Labour Day	Fourth Monday in October
☺	Christmas Day	December 25
☺	Boxing Day	December 26

Also, each province celebrates an Anniversary Day.

### **Tipping**

It is not the usual custom to give tips except occasionally in an expensive hotel or restaurant.

### **Driving/Travelling in a Car**

You are **not** permitted to obtain a drivers licence or drive while you attend Gore High School as an International Student.

You **must** use the safety belt when traveling in the car at all times.

When using a bicycle, you **must** wear a safety helmet.

### **Emergency Situations**

Hopefully you will not ever be in an emergency situation, but this is important information to remember just in case.

If you are in an emergency situation try to remain calm. In New Zealand the phone number to ring in emergencies is 111. An operator will answer the phone and ask you if you would like the Police, Ambulance or Fire Brigade.

Tell the operator your name, what the emergency is about and where to send help – the street number and name, and the name of the town or city.

Be sure only to use this number in emergencies. You can be fined if it is a prank call.

Talk to your homestay family about an escape plan from the house in case of fire. Sometimes in New Zealand we also have earthquakes. Usually they are not very serious ones, but if one happens you should hide under a desk or table.

### **Contact Person**

If you need to contact the school urgently in case of an emergency you should call the Director of International Students, Mr Crosbie on 0252018613.

## **HOSTEL & HOMESTAY**

The New Zealand families who welcome students into their homes are not rich but are families who want to share their lives with you. In return they want to learn about you and your country.

They are inviting you to become a member of their family because they want to share with you their way of living and to get to know you and your country. It is important that you do not compare, in a negative sense, your way of life in N.Z with your way of life at home.

If you are a boarder you must follow hostel rules at all times. You will be given a Hostel Handbook which contains information and rules. In N.Z we like to know where our children are, who they are with and at what time they will be back. You may be used to having more freedom than that, but that is not acceptable here.

Your host family would like you to become a member of the family. This means that you will share the daily chores as well as the pleasures, and take part in family outings and other fun activities. The most important thing however, is to share your own thoughts feelings and impressions with them. This will really make you one of the family. They need to know how you feel. If something is worrying you, it is essential that you tell the family about it.

Not saying anything or not telling the truth is one way we can hurt each other. Belonging to a family means that you take part in everything that the family does together – family parties, gatherings with good friends.

Naturally there may sometimes be a few problems. Living together for such a long time is not easy and everyone has to adjust to everyone else. Small difficulties can sometimes be exaggerated, if you don't communicate with each other.

Some examples of this are:

- ◆ Different eating habits, e.g. slurping noodles. This is not done in N.Z.
- ◆ Eating with your mouth open.
- ◆ Not knowing what is expected of you in certain situations.
- ◆ Setting up family rules that you must accept.
- ◆ Curfews – time you must be home by.
- ◆ The law here compared to home and what you can and can not do.
- ◆ Remember to ask instead of telling your host parents what you are doing.
- ◆ Sniffing drives families crazy. Please buy a box of tissues or get a hanky(handkerchief) and blow your nose.

*These are just some of the things that can cause problems if not talked about.*

## NEW ZEALAND CULTURE

### EATING

In your home country, you may eat with a knife and fork, use only your hands, use chopsticks or eat everything with a spoon. The way you eat reflects the culture you are from.

Now that you are in New Zealand, expect to eat in a different way and expect to eat different foods. There may be foods you do not like in the beginning, but nearly all students will become accustomed to 'New Zealand' style food.

At the table it is polite to ask for things to be passed to you like the sauce or the salt and pepper. Some families pass the food around the table and you help yourself. Others serve a plate with the food already on it. When someone passes you something always say 'thank you'.

If you would like to leave the table when you are finished your meal do not just get up and go. You thank whoever cooked for the meal and then say 'please may I leave the table?' If you have your dinner watching TV remember to say thank you when you are finished. Take your dishes to the sink or dishwasher when you are finished.

### BATHROOM

When you arrive at your new homestay, the bathroom may include different fixtures and you may not know how to use them. That is okay. Ask your homestay parent to show you how to turn on the shower, how to plug the sink or bath. The following are some things to notice: (these may already be customs in your country, but they aren't customs in all countries)

In the bathroom, any water splashed on walls or floors will stay there for hours - sometimes days because it is cool here and water takes a long time to evaporate. So when showering or washing, please always wipe shower walls and floor area when you are finished.

Wet towels take a long time to dry. Ask your family what you should do with towel when you have finished in the bathroom.

Hot water is *very expensive* so try to be economical in your use of it and be considerate of others that need to use it. Please make sure taps are turned off so they do not drip.

Do not spend too long in the shower. Five - ten minutes should be adequate to get yourself clean. It is not necessary to shampoo your hair everyday in our cool climate. It is best to shower before 8pm. No late night showers.

It is your responsibility to provide your own toilet soap, toothpaste, shampoo etc. Ask your family where you should keep these.

Facial tissues or handkerchiefs are commonly used to blow one's nose. It is considered rude to sniff loudly in New Zealand. If you have a cold then use tissues to blow your nose.

Toilet paper is thrown in the toilet (not the rubbish) after use.

Shut the bathroom door (or lock it) when you use the bathroom. New Zealanders like privacy.

The shower curtain should be placed inside the bath when you take a shower.

You sit on the toilet, you do not stand or squat on it.

### HYGIENE

Most people in New Zealand have a bath or shower each day. People who are involved in heavy physical work like farmers or builders may shower or bath twice a day. Remember to check with your homestay parent about the length of time you may spend in the shower and do not use too much hot water.

Your clothes will be washed by your homestay parent, or maybe you would like to wash your own. Check with your homestay parent if you are going to wash your own clothes and ask how to use the machine.

Do not be shy about giving your underwear to your homestay family to wash – we are used to it.

In New Zealand every day we change the clothes that we wear next to our skin, like socks, underwear, shirts and blouses.

When we go to bed we wear our sleeping clothes – pyjamas or nightie. We do not go to bed in our day clothes.

If you are sick talk to the Hostel Managers or to your homestay parent. They will help you and take you to the doctor if you need it.

### **MENINGITIS IS A BIG PROBLEM IN N.Z.**

**DO NOT DRINK OUT OF OTHER PEOPLES DRINK BOTTLES – ESPECIALLY AT SPORTS GAMES AND PARTIES!!!!!!!**

## BED TIME

In New Zealand most families go to bed early, and noise is not acceptable after a certain time. You should use headphones for radios and CDs to avoid disturbing the household.

## ANIMALS

Most New Zealand families have a cat or a dog in their home, or both. They are well trained and are part of the family. The cats and dogs are not eaten in New Zealand as they are in some cultures.

In Southland many people live on farms with cows, sheep or deer. This is a unique experience for many International Students who live with homestay families on a farm and they enjoy it a lot.

Many students say they want a homestay without animals and that is not always possible.

## SAFETY

New Zealand is a safe place to live but you must be careful. When you go out at night you must always ask your homestay family if you can go, and then tell them where you are going to be and what time you will be home.

If you are going to be out later than you said let your homestay parents know. It is considered rude just to go out without telling anyone. It is polite to do this so that they do not worry about you.

Do not walk around the streets on your own.

Your homestay family will allow you to bring friends home, and we ask that your homestay parents know who is in their house. This is being polite. It is not a good idea to carry a lot of money with you. Keep your wallet in your pocket at all times. Do not leave it in your bag.

## **THE SCHOOL**

You are placed in Gore High School when you arrive. You will be helped to choose your subjects for the year and will have a variety of choices. N.Z schools are much more formal than you may be used to. You must always address your teachers as Mr, Mrs, Ms or Miss. You certainly may not use their first names.

School lunches are not free here in N.Z, but most Kiwi students either take their lunch or buy it at their own expense. There is a shop (cafe) at school.

All G.H.S international students are expected to be mature responsible young people. It is not acceptable for you to be difficult to work with or receive low grades. You must always create a good impression and maintain a good attitude to your school work and have assignments in on time.

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Your time at Gore High School will be much easier and more enjoyable if you remember and obey the School rules. Some of the most important rules to remember include:

1. You are expected to attend ALL CLASSES EVERY DAY, arrive on time and take an active part in all school activities that are timetabled for you. All homework and assignments must be completed. If you need help, you must ask your teacher or liaison teacher or family.
2. If you are sick and unable to go to school and/or attend classes, you must tell your family or hostel manager that you are not well. Then the school will be told.
3. You should try to speak English in class, be courteous to your teachers and participate in all classroom activities. Remember, it is very impolite to speak in your first language with other students in the class while the teacher is speaking.
4. At no time are you allowed to leave the school grounds without permission. There are school rules that tell you what you can do and cannot do. Please obey them.
5. At no time are you allowed to change your school or homestay family without permission from the school and your family.

## **HOMESTAY FAMILY RULES**

1. You are expected to be home early from school, unless of course you have asked permission from your family first, for example you may wish to participate in an after school sport, or visit a friend's home.

Whatever the reason you must tell your family where you are going and what time you will be home. You **MUST** be home for dinner each evening.

2. At no time are you allowed to go out at night alone. Family outings or group functions are acceptable. However, you must ensure that you are back home at a reasonable hour, for example not later than 9.00 pm during the week and not later than 11.00 pm at the weekend.
3. If you wish to stay with a friend overnight, you should ask your host family first, who will then telephone the family you wish to stay with and confirm that this is acceptable.
4. At no time are you permitted to go away for weekends or holidays without confirming with your school and homestay family. This is to ensure that you are safe at all times. The telephone number and name of the person/persons you will stay with must be left with your homestay family so that you can be contacted if anything should happen.
5. You are expected to help with any household chores, as New Zealand children do.
6. At no time are you permitted to purchase or drive a car or motorbike on a public road in New Zealand. You may buy a bicycle and your family will help you choose it.
7. You should only use the homestay family's phone in moderation. If calling internationally you need to use a phone card or call collect. Mobile phones are permitted but must be turned off at school at all times. Hostel regulations apply to mobile phones.
8. You are allowed a set amount of pocket money per week. If you wish to buy something for school, clothing or something you need (for instance a haircut) then you may have extra pocket money. One of your homestay parents, or a representative from the hostel, will be a co-signatory for your bank card.
9. You are not permitted to participate in dangerous activities that contravene your health insurance, for example bungee jumping, paragliding etc. Parental consent in writing must be obtained to receive an exemption from this policy.
10. You are not permitted to visit licensed establishments except in the company of your host family.
11. You are not permitted to gamble.

12. The internet may be used in accordance with the conditions set down in the school's LAN contract.

## HOSTEL REGULATIONS

You will find these in the Hostel Handbook. Remember to ask Mr and Mrs Wallace if you do not understand any of the Hostel procedures. They are there to help you settle in.

Remember these rules are made for your benefit and if you follow these guidelines, we are sure you will succeed in New Zealand, both academically and socially.

## MONEY

Money is always a big thing. By now most of you will have opened a bank account. Please check that your parents are able to deposit money into this account for you.

Some of you will have more money at your disposal than others and sometimes this can cause problems.

If you go to the shop to buy ice cream (for example), please do not come back eating – especially if you have small homestay brothers and sisters. Offer to buy one for them or eat it before you come back.

Remember that you have a whole year ahead of you and if you are on a budget please discuss with either your host parents or with us at the school, the things you want to do, so that you can be sure of the costs, and if it is realistic.

Try to remember that your parents are not banks.

## THREE MAGIC WORDS

**Sharing** is important when you are in N.Z. The importance of sharing cannot be emphasized enough. Whether it is a chocolate bar, an experience or a feeling, it is important that you share what you have with others.

Here are a few examples.

- ◆ If you are going into the kitchen to get a drink, ask if anyone else wants anything from the kitchen.
- ◆ If you are going to the store/shop, ask if anyone wants anything.
- ◆ Someone tells you something that either makes you feel happy or sad. Discuss it with your family or a friend.

**Thank you** and **please** are the other two magic words. Please use them all the time as it will be considered rude if you don't.

The most important thing to remember is consideration. This means that you always consider other peoples feelings before you say something, or before you do anything.

It is only polite to spend a little time with your family each evening. When you decide to go to bed for the evening it is important to say "goodnight" to your family. Saying "goodnight" is an important ritual in New Zealand families - to go to bed without saying goodnight is usually to indicate that one is angry or offended.

### **BEING SENT HOME**

Even if most of you are going to have a fantastic year in which you will learn a lot and develop as a person, there will always be one or two who for some reason must be sent home ahead of time. Perhaps one student cannot accept the new rules or cannot understand that the rules apply to them.

One of the rules a student might find hard in the beginning is to always tell the host family/hostel staff, where they are going and when they are coming home. Also, not to just tell but ask to go and then be come home at the time arranged.

You are not allowed to travel alone or with other teenagers in the way that you may be used to at home. However, during school vacations you may visit friends or relations. In order to make a trip you need permission from your parents, host parents and the Director of International Students. If you break this rule you may be sent home.

All contact with DRUGS is prohibited and will result in you returning home immediately.

## **GORE HIGH SCHOOL'S EXPECTATIONS**

- ❑ To be open and to share yourself and your culture with your host family.
- ❑ To be a good representative for the school and your own country.
- ❑ To be flexible, adaptable and positive at all times.
- ❑ To participate in all activities.
- ❑ To accept and show respect for the host country.
- ❑ To talk openly and honestly to the Director and International Department staff and the host family/hostel staff.
- ❑ To participate in school activities.
- ❑ To respect other people
- ❑ To show courtesy towards others.
- ❑ To abide by the rules.
- ❑ To accept decisions made by G.H.S staff at all times.
- ❑ To remember that whatever you do or say in this community is sure to reach the ears of G.H.S and your host family.
  - ❑ To enjoy and contribute to your year as much as possible.

## **COMMON HOST FAMILY COMPLAINTS**

- “Sniffing.” Please use a tissue or a hanky (handkerchief).
- “No common ground for communication.” Please talk to your host family about problems before they turn into a big problem. If you have trouble – ask for help.
- “Sleeping arrangements.” In N.Z we use two sheets and bedding. We sleep between the two sheets.
- “They are always in their room.” Don’t stay there all the time.
- “They aren’t making any attempt to fit into our family routine.” Try and involve yourself within the family structure.
- “Often goes out and doesn’t ask if they can or say where they are going or what time they will be home.” Please arrange this with host parents.
- “Doesn’t appear to have any friends.” Most homestays welcome having friends over occasionally.
- “Doesn’t ever say please or thank you or excuse me.” Please remember your manners.
- “Never appears to understand what we are saying.” If you do not understand – PLEASE say “I don’t understand”, don’t say Yes or OK.
- “Only think of themselves”. This is the sharing thing again.
- “Act as if they are the most important and they should come first.’ Remember you are part of the family, not an important guest.
- “Won’t help with the household chores – always has to be reminded.” You have chores the same as the rest of the household, please remember to do these.

## **CULTURE SHOCK**

What is culture shock?

This is when our bodies and minds are adjusting to new things and in some cases rejecting the change or finding it just too hard to accept.

Signs of culture shock can be any of the following:

- Weight gain or loss
- Comparing things to home.
- Confusion.
- Tiredness.
- Spending a lot of time on your own in your room.
- Not making friends.
- Nothing is as good as home.
- Home sickness.
- Boredom.
- Feeling lazy, sad and unwelcome.
- Stomach ache and headaches.
- Refusing to admit there is something wrong.
- Believing that you always know best.

Some ways to cope with culture shock.

- Physical exercise.
- Try to keep yourself as busy as possible.
- Talk to someone about the way you are feeling.
- Try to stay amongst people.
- Talk to your co-ordinator.
- Be willing to accept change.
- Be willing to let your host family love you.
- Don't compare things.
- Don't speak in your native language.
- Don't ring home too much.
- Put yourself out to meet other people.
- Don't rely on other international students.

Every international student goes through a time of adjustment and during this time you will experience at least one of the above things. Just remember to stay positive, open and willing to accept what is happening.

## **ADJUSTMENT CYCLE**

Remember it takes approximately 3 months to adjust to new surroundings and to accept a different culture and become comfortable with it. It works – only if you let it.

The following is a guide to what may happen. For some of you only one or two points may be experienced. For others you may experience the entire range. Just remember – no one can help you if you don't tell them what is happening to you.

### **AT FIRST**

Everything seems exciting, new and wonderful. People are friendly and will want to talk to you. Host families are just great and the school is not too bad either.

**NB:** Remember this is just the beginning and called the HONEYMOON PERIOD, and honeymoons don't last forever. Things may not change and you may just go on and enjoy your year if you keep an open mind and a willingness to accept things the way they are.

### **CULTURE FATIGUE**

You will start to notice the differences and will not know quite how to handle them, so will start to feel a little uncomfortable and perhaps unable to talk about it. You may become both mentally and physically tired and want to sleep a lot. Translation may become difficult for you or you may find some of the families' habits or rules too hard.

**NB:** Look at the differences and try to think of them as new experiences and remind yourself that this is why you came here. Tell someone if you are having difficulty with translation. I'm sure they will tell you what to do. Take some time out or ask other family members to slow down when they speak to you.

### **SURFACE ADJUSTMENT**

You will start to know things and accept things more easily. You will start to feel as if you belong within the family and no longer are a stranger in their home. You will start to feel more comfortable about talking with people.

**NB:** If you get to this stage, remember that you can only improve from here if you allow others to be part of your experience by talking to them. Include yourself in family activities and get out and make friends so that you can socialize.

## **PROBLEMS**

Although things will appear alright, small things will start to happen which could cause you problems if you do not talk to someone about it. You may become homesick and again feel like everyone does not understand you or what it is like for you.

**NB:** This is the one time you can let your whole year fall apart and find that you may hurt many people including yourself if you are not open and honest with the people around you. Please tell them what is happening to you.

## **FITTING IN**

You will have accepted the cultural differences by now and may not even notice them any more. You may even feel that you have become a Kiwi in your own way. This is good and will make for a very enjoyable year with your family, school and friends.

**NB:** Keep at it – you are half way there!

## **GOING HOME**

You will have mixed feelings about this when the time comes, as you have become part of another family and have made many friends and so the cycle will start again. When you go home, some of the same feelings will be experienced. For example, everything will be different because you are comparing everything to N.Z now. Talk to someone if you are having trouble with this.

## TIPS FOR A SMOOTH YEAR

Having an International student in their home is a big commitment for a host family. It is important to show respect for their lifestyle at all times and to show appreciation for their generosity.

- It is up to the student to adapt to the lifestyles of the family.
- Discuss rules and household chores with your host family during the first week. Write them all down so you know and can remember them.
- Surprise your family with a small gift, or cook a nice meal for them every now and then, just to show you appreciate them. Don't forget the "MAGIC" words!
- Don't buy food etc. and eat it in front of your family without offering them some.
- Join in family activities even if you find some of them boring. This shows them you are interested in them.
- Do something with the younger siblings, like taking them for KFC, or to the movies. Offer to babysit.
- Always **ASK** permission to go anywhere, and what time you have to be back. **BE BACK ON TIME**. If no one is home when you want to go out, leave a note explaining where you are going and what time you will be back, and the phone number if you are going to a friends place.
- If inviting friends back home – ask permission first.
- Do not abuse the telephone and try to only call home when necessary. Pay all bills (accounts) straight away.
- Always ring home if you are going to be late home for some reason. Host parents worry. Never be frightened to ring late at night if you get stuck somewhere and can't get home. Have taxi money on you at all times.
- Never be frightened to say you don't understand anything. People would rather repeat themselves than have you get upset. No one will mind repeating what ever it is.
- Pay for your own personal items yourself. Eg. Shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush etc.
- Do not borrow money from anyone and do not lend money to anyone. Certainly not to other students or to family members.
- Try not to call home your home country too much or have your natural family call you too much as it makes you more homesick. Talk to your host parents.
- **MOST IMPORTANT – DO NOT SPEAK YOUR OWN LANGUAGE AROUND OTHER KIWI PEOPLE. IT IS VERY RUDE AND KIWIS WILL NOT APPROACH YOU AT SCHOOL.**
- In N.Z swimming trunks or a swimsuit are called "togs". So if someone asks you if you have "togs" to go swimming, that is what they mean.