



Strathfield Girls High School

International Student Handbook

2024





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STRATHFIELD GIRLS
A LANGUAGES HIGH SCHOOL

Donated by
YEAR 12 2011



Welcome

'promoting a sense of self worth, integrity and respect for self and others'

At Strathfield Girls High School we provide a caring and friendly environment where students are challenged to do their best.

Students are empowered to achieve self-reliance and to become confident, responsible and successful young women.

Our school has been welcoming girls from overseas countries for many years and is a rich gathering of cultures.

Fifty-six different cultural groups are represented in the school population and we promote acceptance, valuing and celebration of cultural diversity.

Students at Strathfield Girls High School are encouraged to fulfil their dreams, in their academic endeavours, on the sporting field and in their creative expressions of art, dance and music.

Our girls from local communities and international countries will become well-rounded young women, ready to contribute to the world with a strong moral code and friendships to last a lifetime.



Principal's message

Strathfield Girls High School is a dynamic learning community that has at its core, a strong sense of belonging, strengths-based leadership, and the pursuit of excellence in every aspect of school life.

The vibrant and positive learning culture at our school enables students to emerge empowered and resilient individuals, equipped with confidence, courage, and life effectiveness skills to contribute positively as citizens of the 21st century.

At Strathfield Girls High School, we maintain a whole-school focus on innovative teaching practices, wraparound wellbeing initiatives and the achievement of personal best through our core values framed around respect, responsibility and readiness.

As an all-inclusive thriving learning community, we believe in the provision of collaborative leadership that supports professional learning, diverse curriculum and rich extra-curricular offerings with an emphasis on student and staff leadership, strong partnerships and ongoing personal growth.

Welcome to Strathfield Girls High School!

Ms Mechel Pikoulas B ED, Ma Phil
Principal



dream, believe, inspire, achieve...

School Directory

Year Advisers

Your Year Adviser can speak to you if you have any concerns about your school work.

Year 7	Mr J Gong
Year 8	Ms I Falciola
Year 9	Ms E Manahan
Year 10	Mr J Lau
Year 11	Ms A Creevy
Year 12	Ms R Phillip

Head Teachers

English	Mr G Down
Mathematics	Mr G Smith
Science	Dr H Witchard
History	Ms R McKenzie
Creative Arts	Ms S Wade
Languages	Ms A Lee
PDHPE	Mr J Hartley
Social Science	Mr B Koutsoukos
TAS	Ms L Chopra
Learning & Engagement	Ms C Eklund
Head Teacher Administration	Mr T Grech
Counsellor	Ms J Pritchard



School Values and Beliefs

Success isn't just about what you accomplish in life. It is about what you inspire others to do.

Our teachers are professional, caring and inspirational leaders.

Their creative and innovative style provide engaging learning environments for all.

We believe in:

- striving for excellence in academic, cultural, creative and sporting pursuits;
- developing skills for lifelong learning;
- providing a nurturing, safe and inclusive school environment which fosters co-operation and acceptance of difference;
- promoting a sense of self-worth, integrity and respect for self and others; and
- strengthening the valuable partnerships between students, staff, parents and the community.



School Values and Beliefs

Students at our school enjoy the experience of learning.

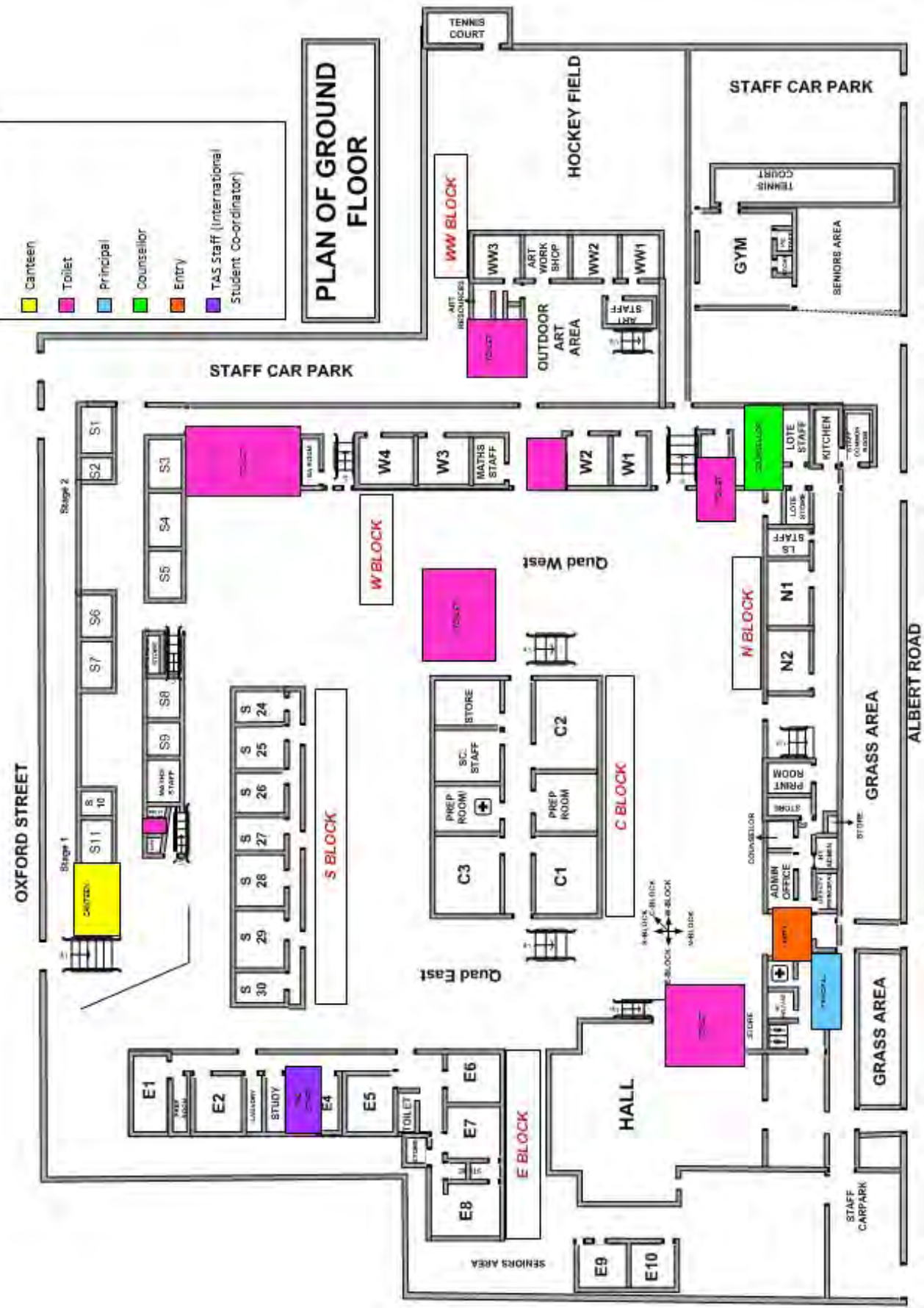
Our girls excel academically, in sport, in music, performing and creative arts as well as in a range of cultural and social activities.

At Strathfield Girls High we are extremely proud of the achievements of staff, students and parents in meeting the challenges of the 21st century and always managing to improve the learning opportunities for all students.

Our school is a fun place to learn and all students are challenged in the learning process and are supported to exceed beyond our expectations.



School Map



Bell Times

2024 BELL TIMES

MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
Warning Bell	8:42	Warning Bell	8:42	Warning Bell	8:42	Warning Bell	8:42	Warning Bell	8:42
Roll Call	8:45-8:55	Roll Call	8:45-9:00	Roll Call and SRE	8:45-9:15	Roll Call	8:45-8:55	Roll Call	8:45-8:55
Period 1	9:00-10:00	Period 1	9:05-10:05	Period 1	9:15-10:15	Period 1	9:00-10:00	Period 1	9:00-10:00
Period 2	10:05-11:05	Recess 1	10:05-10:25	Period 2	10:15-11:15	Period 2	10:05-11:05	Period 2	10:05-11:05
Recess 1	11:05-11:25	Period 2	10:25-11:25	Recess 1	11:15-11:35	Recess 1	11:05-11:25	Recess 1	11:05-11:25
Period 3	11:25-12:25	Period 3 Assembly	11:25-12:00	Period 3	11:35-12:35	Period 3	11:25-12:25	Period 3	11:25-12:25
Period 4	12:30-1:30	Lunch 1	12:00-12:20	Period 4	12:35-1:30	Period 4	12:30-1:30	Period 4	12:30-1:30
Lunch 1	1:30-1:50	Lunch 2	12:20-12:40	Lunch 1	1:30-1:50	Lunch 1	1:30-1:50	Lunch 1	1:30-1:50
Lunch 2	1:50-2:10	Period 4	12:45-1:45	Lunch 2	1:50-2:10	Lunch 2	1:50-2:10	Lunch 2	1:50-2:10
Period 5	2:10-3:10	Period 5	1:45-2:45	Period 5	2:10-3:10	Period 5	2:10-3:10	Period 5	2:10-3:10

Legend: Sport periods Breaks Assembly

School Support Services

School Support

I feel sick:

Tell your teacher if you are in class, or see the front office staff.

I need to leave school early:

Before Roll Call that day you must bring a note from your parent/guardian and bring it to a Deputy Principal who will sign it, then you take your signed note to room E4.

I am late for school:

If you are late for school or absent text 0436-678-916 and state the reason why. You need a medical certificate for ALL absences. Bring a note from your guardian and report to E4 where you will be signed into school.

I need information regarding the International Student Program:

Speak to the International Student Coordinator, Ms Anderson.

I need help with my school work:

Speak to your class teacher who will assist you, also, you could attend the Homework Help program in the library from 7:30am- 5:30pm.

I am upset, worried or missing home:

Speak to your International Student Coordinator or the School Counsellor who will be able to help you.

I have a problem with my school log in:

Speak to the Technology Coordinator in the Library.

School Support Services

Support Services

Counselling

The School Counsellor and her office is located next to the LOTE Staffroom.

What is a School Counsellor?

In all New South Wales government schools, there is a counsellor who is a qualified teacher and educational psychologist with special training to help students with any problems they are having, or to help them get information they may need.

This service is free and confidential.

Why do students see the Counsellor?

Academic problems

Worries about progress
Indecision about staying at school
No quiet place to study at home

Personal problems

Sadness in missing your
country/friends Feeling lonely at school
Home problems such as not getting along with family
members Feeling anxious about making friend

Parents may make appointments for interviews with the counsellors through the Administration Office. Students can make appointments for interviews through their Year Adviser, Team Leader or directly with the counsellor.

ESL Support

Learning & Engagement Teachers are concerned with developing effective learning skills and strategies for students. They work across the curriculum and are located in the Learning & Engagement staffroom. Students who are experiencing learning difficulties may be referred by staff, parents or the students themselves.

Year Advisers/Subject Head Teachers

Subject Head Teachers and Year Advisers will assist you with academic problems or concerns you may have, settling into a new class and school.







School Uniform

School Uniform is Compulsory at Strathfield Girls High. It can be purchased from Lowes at Burwood Plaza. Minimal jewellery may be worn at school i.e. sleepers or plain stud earrings, a simple gold or silver necklace and a watch.

Facial piercings are not permitted. Inappropriate haircuts and coloured hair are not permitted.

Strathfield Girls High School is a gum free zone.

Overblouse	White short sleeved peak collar pintuck (Should not be tucked in). White long sleeved peak collar pintuck (Should not be tucked in).
Skirt - Junior	Grey and blue check skirt with two inverted pleats at the front. It should be worn with the hem below the knee. Pleats should not be adjusted.
Skirt – Senior	Blue and grey checked kilt only. This should be worn at mid-calf length
Jumper	Navy V-neck woollen jumper with the school crest.
Blazer	Navy Blue with school crest compulsory.
School Hat	Navy nylon wide brimmed hat with school crest band. School hats are compulsory for Year 7- 9 students.
Tights	Navy or black opaque stockings.
Socks	Plain white socks worn approximately 2cm above the ankle. Knee length socks or socks below the ankle are not acceptable.
Shoes	School shoes which are flat, plain black leather and lace up. For safety purposes, they should cover the top of the foot.
Skivvy	White skivvy worn under the blouse in cold weather.
Scarves/ Gloves/ Ribbons	Navy or white.
Hijab	Plain white or navy hijab



Junior Uniform



Senior Uniform

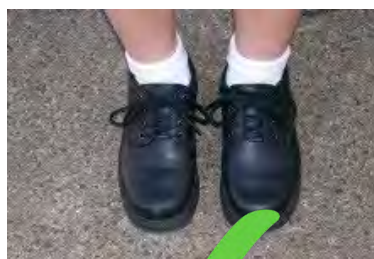
PE SPORT UNIFORM

Polo Top	Panelled microfibre with school crest
Shorts	Navy microfibre mesh with emblem
Track Suits	Navy/sky panel/piping with emblem
Socks	White ankle style worn approximately 2cm above the ankle
Shoes	Sport shoes are required. Canvas shoes are not permitted.

School Uniform

Important Note Regarding Shoes

Black leather shoes are a very important part of the school uniform and in accordance with Work Health & Safety Requirements. Canvas shoes are not permitted.



Students Not in Uniform

Strathfield Girls High School is a uniformed school with zero tolerance on uniform offences.

- It is expected that students will wear the correct uniform whilst travelling to and from school as well as at school, including examination days, official functions and excursions (except when specific exemption has been given by the Principal or Deputy Principal).
- The uniform should be clean and worn neatly. Students will be asked to comply with the correct uniform, or will be sent home in accordance with the zero tolerance policy on uniform. They will not be allowed to return to school until all proper uniform and personal appearance is complied with.
- Students who are unable to wear the correct uniform at any time must see their Deputy Principal at the beginning of the school day. Students not in correct uniform on any school day may be placed on detention and/or sent home.

Other Issues Regarding Uniforms

- Students must wear the uniform designated for their year.
- On sports days students are required to come to school in their school sports uniform.
- Students wishing to wear additional clothing for extra warmth in winter must ensure this is not visible either above or below shirts.
- Hair should be neat and tidy. No coloured hair is allowed.
- Skirts should be no shorter than mid-calf/three quarters.



Places in Strathfield

Strathfield Library

Strathfield Square



Strathfield Park



Strathfield Train Station



Burwood Shopping Centre



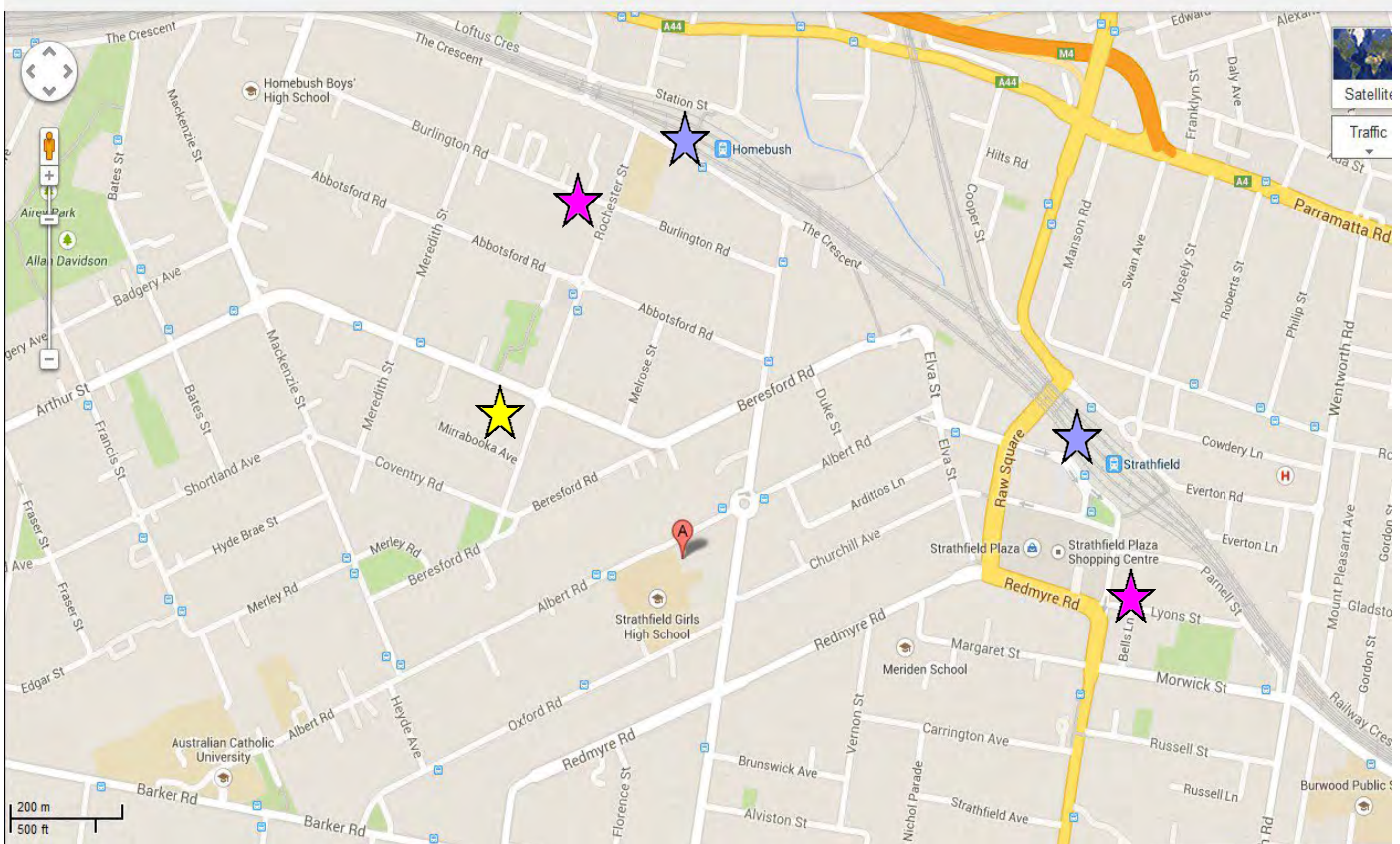
Strathfield Council Chambers

Strathfield is a suburb of the **Inner West** of Sydney.

It is **14kms west** of the Sydney business centre and harbour.

Strathfield is known as a region for education, supporting a variety of Independent and Public Schools, and The Australian Catholic University.

Map of Strathfield



 **Strathfield Station** is a major transport hub and you can catch many suburban and country trains which will connect you to all the major rail networks. Homebush Station is also located nearby.

 **Strathfield Library** is located at 65-67 Rochester St Homebush, and has public access computers with internet and word processing facilities. The library is open 7 days a week.

 There are many **shopping areas** close to Strathfield, Burwood, Parramatta and Sydney which provide large shopping malls, while Strathfield Plaza and Homebush are smaller shopping areas providing hot food, groceries, pharmaceuticals and stationery supplies.

There are a variety of **medical services** in both Strathfield and Homebush. Check the internet for your most convenient medical practice.

There are many **shopping areas** close to Strathfield, Burwood, Parramatta and Sydney which provide large shopping malls, while Strathfield Plaza and Homebush are smaller shopping areas providing hot food, groceries, pharmaceuticals and stationery supplies.

In case of an emergency

In Australia you need to **call 000** to contact the police, ambulance or fire brigade.

The local police station is:

Strathfield Police Station

Strathfield Plaza

Corner of Churchill Avenue and The Boulevard

Strathfield.

Phone: 9746 7084

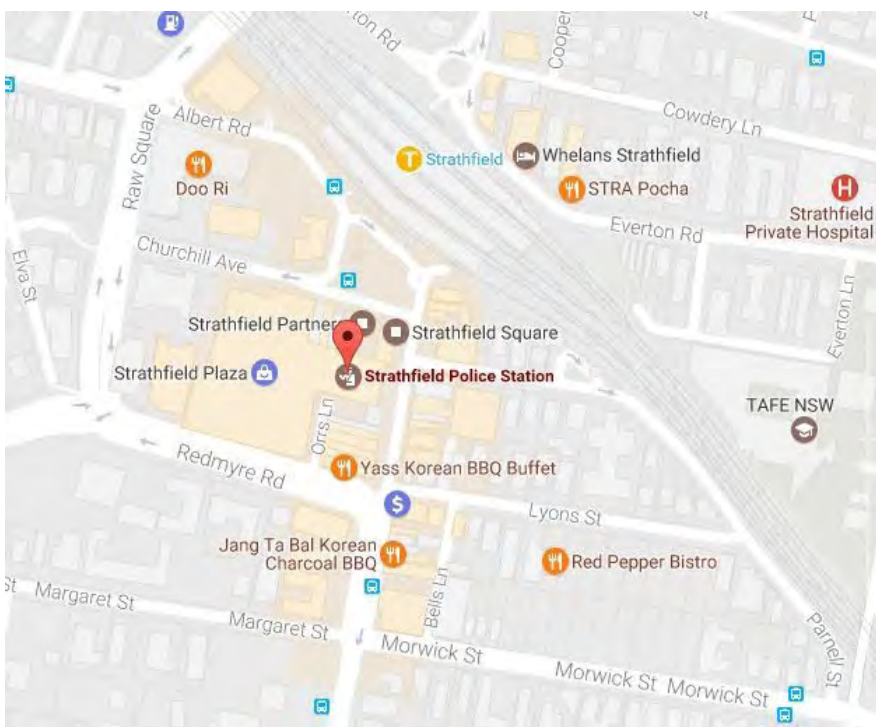


NSW Police Force

If you feel unsafe contact the Police and tell your Principal and International Student Coordinator.

You and the law

- It is **illegal to drink alcohol** if you are **under 18 years of age**.
- It is **illegal to buy cigarettes** if you are **under 18 years of age**.
- Possession and use of illegal drugs is a **criminal offence**.





You as an International Student

The Deputy Principal, in consultation with your English assessor and the Principal, will review your academic profile and will determine which Year group and courses will be appropriate for your pattern of study at Strathfield Girls High School.

When you enrol, the school will conduct English and Maths tests to ensure that you are placed in the correct year and level to ensure your success in the learning process. At Strathfield Girls High School we pride ourselves in our Learning and Engagement faculty who are integral in the nurturing and induction of International Students to our school.

You will be allocated a buddy/friend to accompany you to classes and guide you through your transition to school life in Australia.



Work & Transport

Working a Part-time Job and Your Work Rights

Allowable Work Hours

In order for you to work part-time, you **MUST**:

- **Not** be enrolled in an Intensive English program
- have been **enrolled for at least six months in your current high school**
- have a satisfactory attendance record
- provide your school with a letter of consent from your parents.

Students enrolled in an Intensive English program are not permitted to work.

If you are taking a part-time job, remember:

- Any part-time work during school term must not interfere with your school studies
- You must **NOT** work more than 40 hours per fortnight (14 days) which is a mandatory student visa condition
- You should not work more than 10 hours per week in school terms
- You should not work during school days (Monday – Thursday) as this may impact on your learning
- You should not work past 8pm during the weekend.

Tax File Number

You must obtain an Australia Tax File Number (TFN) in order to work part-time. Your TFN is your personal reference number in the Australia tax system and you will be asked to provide your TFN to your employer at the workplace. If you do not have a TFN, you will be taxed at a higher rate.

You can apply for a TFN online at the **Australian Taxation Office** website at www.ato.gov.au.

Know Your Work Rights

Workplace rights

Pay rates and workplace conditions are set by Australian law. All people working in Australia, including those from overseas, have rights and protections at work. These cannot be taken away by contracts or agreements. These rights protect:

- entitlement to a minimum wage and superannuation
- challenge of unfair dismissal from the job
- leave, breaks and rest periods
- a healthy and safe work environment

Getting help to resolve a workplace issue will NOT automatically affect your student visa.

If you have questions about your pay and conditions while in Australia, you can contact the **Fair Work Ombudsman** for free information, resources and advice.

Visit www.fairwork.gov.au for information for visa holders and international students. This includes information in 27 languages. There are also a range of helpful videos available at www.youtube.com/fairworkgovau about working in Australia in many languages. You can also contact the Fair Work Ombudsman by phone within Australia on **13 13 94 (Translating and Interpreting Service 13 14 50)**.

Pay

Your minimum pay rate can come from an award, enterprise agreement or other registered agreement, or the national minimum wage. Employees have to be paid the right pay rate for all hours they work including training, team meetings, opening and closing the business and doing a trial shift.

National minimum wage

Certain employees may have different pay entitlements depending on whether they have a reduced work capacity because of disability, if they are under the age of 21 or if they are an apprentice or trainee. You can calculate your correct pay and entitlements using the Pay and Conditions Tool at www.fairwork.gov.au/pay

More information on employment in Australia is available on our website at www.homeaffairs.gov.au and on the website of the Department of Employment at www.employment.gov.au



Always ask for a payslip to keep track of your hourly rate, penalty rates, superannuation contributions and tax details, especially if you are getting paid with cash in hand. This is a mandatory requirement for an employer in Australia.



Transport and Travel Concessions

Children **4 to 15 years of age** are automatically entitled to a child's half fare concession and are required to carry a **Proof of Age Card** to be entitled to the concession fares.

School students **16 years of age and older** are entitled to a half fare concession but are required to carry a **NSW Senior Secondary Student Concession Card** as proof of their eligibility. This will allow you to travel on public transport at concession fares.



Please see your office staff to apply for a Proof of Age Card (under 16 years old) or a NSW Senior Secondary Student Concession Card (16 years old and over). You must carry this card with you at all times and present it to ticket inspectors when required.

Opal card is the smartcard ticketing system used to pay for travel on public transport in Sydney, the Blue Mountains, Central Coast, the Hunter and the Illawarra.

You should get a **green CHILD/YOUTH OPAL CARD** by applying online at the Opal website: www.opal.com.au/ordercard. If you lose your card you can report it as lost or stolen.

You can also get an **unregistered Child/Youth Opal card** from your nearest newsagent or opal retailer over the counter. However, this card is not registered and therefore cannot be reported as lost or stolen.



Health Cover

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

You must have and maintain your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while you are in Australia. This allows you to access medical services at an affordable cost while you study in Australia. It is also a student visa requirement.

Activate your OSHC membership

You would have already purchased an OSHC membership before you arrive. **It is important that you activate your OSHC as soon as possible if you have not already done that.**

Medibank OSHC members

If your OSHC policy is provided by **Medibank OSHC**, activate your membership by following the steps below:

Go to <https://www.medibankoshc.com.au/oshcactivate/>

Search the student profile using personal details including membership number, birth date, and name.

Then fill the next page with student information and click “submit” when completed.

Obtain your OSHC membership card

Once you have activated your membership, it is important that you obtain your membership card. Different providers may have different forms of membership card (electronic or plastic card).

If you are **Medibank OSHC member**, you can download your **Digital Membership Card** through the Online Member Services on the Medibank website.

1. Log in to Online Members Services at www.medibankoshc.com.au
2. Once logged in, select ‘My Account’ in the top menu
3. Select ‘View Digital Card’
4. Once completed, save a copy of the card to your mobile phone and computer or tablet so that you can access it at all times.

Know your cover

It is important that you know what is covered and what is not covered in your policy, how much you can claim and how to make a claim if you do have to visit a doctor.

If you are a **Medibank OSHC member**, you can access the following **Online Member Services** on www.medibankoshc.com.au:

- Activate membership for new members
- Access digital member card
- Update membership details (including bank details for refund)
- Get policy information
- Make online claims

If you have a problem with your OSHC, you should contact your insurer in the first instance. If you are insured with Medibank OSHC, call 134 148.

*If you are **NOT** a Medibank OSHC member, ensure that you check with your OSHC provider to find out how to activate your cover, obtain your membership card and how to make a claim online.*

Accommodation

Accommodation

Homestay for under 18 students

If you are living in a homestay approved by DE International, your accommodation has been arranged by one of the four approved homestay providers.

Rules and expectations

Homestay is a great way to learn about the Australian culture and to improve your English. However, living with a new family in Australia can be quite challenging at first, and you need to follow **some rules on how you are expected to behave in a homestay family**:

✓ Follow the rules

Because your accommodation has been approved by DE International, it is important that you follow the rules to make sure you stay safe during your stay in Australia:

- **Come home for dinner every day** – you are expected to come home after each school day. You cannot stay overnight at a friend's or relative's place without approval from DE International
- **Follow the curfew time** – on special occasions when you have to come home late, you should be home by 8 pm on weekdays and 9pm during the weekends if your host is ok with it
- **Stay in a homestay arranged by one of the four approved homestay providers** (see 9.2) and seek approval from DE International if you want to move
- **Do not invite friends to stay at your homestay overnight** without your host's consent.
- switch off your devices by 11 pm
- Internet should only be used for school purpose, and not playing games until early hours of the morning.

Your homestay will also have house rules that you must follow, but a lot of them are just common sense. For example,

- keep your room clean and tidy during your stay
- do not eat in the bedroom for hygiene reasons
- tidy up or clean up after yourself around the home
- call your host if you are running late
- turn off the lights and appliances when you are not using them to avoid wasting energy
- take short showers no longer than 15 minutes to save water, especially during drought season

✓ Be respectful and considerate

Always show respect and be polite to your homestay family. Treat them the way you would like to be treated. Be aware that what you do in the home may affect others. For example, watch the volume when you play music or watch TV, and clean up after yourself, especially in common areas such as kitchen and bathrooms.

✓ Take time to know and talk to your homestay family

Don't be shy! Instead of going into your own room when you come home, hang out with your host family. It's always good to start the day with "good morning" and start a conversation with "How was your day?" when you come home.

Also, don't be afraid to ask questions when you are unsure, and talk to your host if you want to be heard, such as if you want more food at dinner time or if your room is too warm. Just be respectful and reasonable.

Similarly, **your homestay host** also has to follow rules when they are hosting you. For example, they must:

- welcome you into the home and include you in family activities
- give you a key and any passcodes required to access the residence
- provide you with a safe and secure bedroom with storage space for your personal items, and facilities including a bed, desk, chair and adequate lighting
- live in the residence with you at all times, including holiday periods; and inform DE International if there's any change to the accommodation and welfare arrangements
- give you access to heating in winter and cooling in summer
- provide three meals per day, including food for making lunch
- attend school meetings and communicate with the school about your studies.

If there are problems in your homestay and they are not resolved after you speak to your host, or if the matter is sensitive and you prefer to speak to someone else, don't be afraid to speak to your International Student Coordinator. They are here to help you.



Renting or Sharing an Accommodation (over 18 students)

If you have turned 18 and decided to rent or share an accommodation, make sure you know your rights and responsibilities as a tenant.

The **Fair Trading NSW** website provides useful information on renting: <https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/>

Under the law, your landlord must give you a copy of the New Tenant Checklist:

Here are some general **Dos** and **Don'ts** when you are renting on your own:

DOs:

- ✓ **Let your school know your new address within 7 days (a student visa condition)**, and let them know of an emergency contact – this person should be a trustworthy adult friend or relative in Sydney, and preferably over 21.
- ✓ Make sure you **sign a lease agreement**, and read and understand the terms. The agreement will protect you if there are problems with your landlord. Remember you cannot be charged for the preparation of the agreement. **Keep a copy** of the agreement and all other related documents.
- ✓ **Check your agreement carefully** so you understand what you are signing up for. A few common things to look for are:
 - **Rent:** Check that the weekly rate is what you have agreed to and the time period of the contract. You have to pay your rent in advance. Your rent can only be increased after the specified period of time.
 - **Bond:** this is a deposit that you pay to cover any damages or if you end the lease early. The maximum you can be asked to pay is 4 weeks of rent. This bond should be refunded to you at the end of your tenancy.
 - **Any other fees** such as administrative fees, utilities (except water) etc
- ✓ **Get a receipt** for any rent or fees that you have paid and keep them for your records. Avoid paying in cash if possible, and make sure you ask for a receipt.
- ✓ **Respect and follow the house rules**, especially if you are sharing the accommodation with others. However, if the house rules are unreasonable, refer to your lease agreement and talk to your landlord.

Keep the accommodation tidy and in good condition. Your landlord has the right to inspect the accommodation but they cannot show up without giving you notice.

DON'Ts:

- ✗ **Move into an accommodation without an inspection or a key.** You should only move into a place after checking that it is in good condition.
- ✗ **Pay a large deposit for a cheaper rate, or more than you need to.** For example you do not need to pay more than 4 weeks of the rent for the bond.
- ✗ **Rent a place without signing a lease agreement.** It is illegal and is a clear warning sign of scam or subletting. Subletting is illegal in Australia and it will leave you unprotected if something bad happens.
- ✗ **Let your landlord keep your passports, ID document or personal belongings.** While they may ask for copies of your passport or ID documents, they cannot keep them. They also cannot keep your personal items.

Problems with Your Lease

If you think you are being treated unfairly by your landlord, or if you have any unresolved problems:

- talk to your **International Student Coordinator** immediately for help and advice
- make a complaint to **NSW Fair Trading** at:
<https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/help-centre/online-tools/make-a-complaint>
- talk to the **police** in some cases, such as when you are scammed.



Visa and Course Requirements

Visa Requirements You Should Know

Australia's laws promote quality education and consumer protection for overseas students. These laws are known as the ESOS framework and they include the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code 2018.

For a summary of the ESOS framework see: <http://www.internationaleducation.gov.au>

For information about student visa requirements refer to the Department of Home Affairs (HA) website: www.homeaffairs.gov.au

Contact the **International Student Coordinator** at your school if you have any concerns or questions about your school, personal issues or other problems. The Coordinator will assist you or refer you to the appropriate staff member.

Your student visa

The following regulations apply to your studies at a NSW government school:

Attendance and Course Requirements

- You must **attend a minimum of 80%** of all scheduled classes. If you do not meet attendance requirements you may be reported to Immigration, unless there are compassionate or compelling circumstances (refer to guidelines below).
- You must provide a doctor's certificate for any absences of 3 days or more. The doctor must be a registered medical practitioner. If you are absent for 1 or 2 days, a letter of explanation must be provided by your carer or if you are over 18 years, you can provide your own written explanation to the principal.
- You **must meet course progress requirements**. Your school will provide you with information about course requirements as outlined by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). Further information about course requirements is available at: <http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au>
- If you fail to meet the 80% attendance requirements or the course progress requirements, and fail to appeal or do not receive a successful school appeal outcome, you will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs and this may impact the status of your student visa. An **Intention to Report** letter will be issued to you and your parents and you will have 20 school days to appeal internally then externally. If all your appeals are unsuccessful, you would be reported to Immigration and your visa may be cancelled.

As an international student on a student visa, you must:

- comply with your student visa conditions
- ensure you have and continue to maintain your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for as long as you stay in Australia on a student visa
- tell your school if you change your address or other contact details
- maintain satisfactory course progress and attendance.

Information about visa conditions for student visa holders is available on the Department of Home Affairs website at <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud/more/visa-conditions/visa-conditions-students>, or call 131 881.

Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements

- All students must be accompanied to their approved accommodation upon arrival in Australia.
 - If you have requested a Homestay family be arranged, then a compulsory airport transfer will be arranged for you.
 - If a relative or close family friend has been approved as your carer then arrangements must be made for them to meet you at Sydney International Airport.
- If you are under 18 years, you must **maintain your approved accommodation, support and welfare arrangements**. If these arrangements are approved by the DE International, **you must not change those arrangements without prior written approval**. Requests to change the arrangements must be made in writing to DE International and signed by your parents.
- If you want to **change your Homestay**, you should contact the International Student Coordinator at your school.
- NSW Department of Education recommends that students over 18 continue to live with relatives or Homestay families. Changes to accommodation should be within reasonable travelling distance to your school.
- Your parent or relative (approved carer) must **notify your school** of your residential address **within 7 days of arriving in Australia** and notify any changes of address and contact details within 7 days. Students over 18 years who change address must also notify their school within 7 days.

Conditions of Enrolment

- You must commence school enrolment on the date stated on the **Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)** and if this is not possible, notify DE International in writing within 24 hours of the start date on the CoE.
- You must adhere to school rules and the terms and conditions of enrolment as stated on the international student application form. You will receive information about school rules and expected behaviour at orientation.
- Your school may suspend or cancel your enrolment on grounds of misbehaviour. For further information about student behaviour and suspension and expulsion of students, refer to the International Students Coordinator at your school.
- Travel during school holidays, other than returning to your home country, is only permitted if you are travelling with your carer or relatives or on an approved school excursion. Written permission from your parents is required.
- If you want to transfer to another government school you must provide a written request to your school signed by your parents.
- If you want to change provider you must provide a written request to your school signed by your parents. For further information concerning visa regulations about change of provider, refer to the Department of Home Affairs website and the coordinator at your school.

Taking Leave

If you are going to be absent for **a week or more** during school term, or plan to take extended leave, your parents **must request approval** from the principal and **DE International** prior to taking leave or booking flights. Approval is only granted on compassionate or compelling grounds (refer to guidelines below).

Deferment of Course Commencement Date

Any request for a deferment must be submitted in writing and signed by your parents to DE International. A request for deferment after your student visa has been issued will only be approved where evidence of compelling and compassionate circumstances can be provided. A deferment may affect your visa so please consult the Department of Home Affairs before submitting a request.

Guidelines for Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances

Leave approved on grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances is not counted in attendance records. Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond your control and which have an impact upon your course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but not limited to:

- illness, where a medical certificate states that you are unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate or other evidence should be provided either prior to departure or on return)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel and this has impacted on your studies
- a traumatic experience which could include, but is not limited to:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of an accident
 - witnessing or being the victim of crime and this has impacted on you (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports or advice)
- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

Suspension of Studies

If you are required to take leave for **longer than 5 days** from school due to compassionate or compelling circumstances, a suspension of your studies may be possible, whereby your absence is not counted towards your attendance rate.

Prior to taking leave, a signed request from your parents must be submitted to DE International along with evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances.

A suspension of studies may affect your visa so please consult the Department of Home Affairs before submitting a request

Complaints and Appeals

NSW Department of Education has a complaints and appeals process which is available on the website. If you wish to make a complaint or appeal a decision made concerning your enrolment, course progress or other decision, you should contact the International Student Coordinator at your school. Your carer (if you are under 18) or support person (if you are over 18) must be present with you in any appeal interviews.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of internal complaint and appeal process, you will be given access to the external appeals process through the NSW Ombudsman.

You must maintain your enrolment throughout any appeal process until the process has been completed.

Work

- Students attending an Intensive English program are not permitted to work part time.
- To work part-time, DE International requires that you must have been enrolled for at least six months in your current school, have a satisfactory attendance record and provide your school with a letter of consent from your parents before beginning part-time work.
- Any part-time work during school term must not interfere with your school studies and must not exceed 40 hours per fortnight. You should not work more than 10 hours per week in school terms as any more hours may impact on your learning.

School Information



Welfare

Strathfield Girls High School provides a welfare system to assist International students during their time at the school.

Each student year has an advisor who co-ordinates and supports all the students in their scholastic year with academic and general school issues which may arise.

The International Student Co-ordinator will assist students with the practical aspects of living and studying in Australia and will liaise with the Department of Education International Students.

The school counsellor is also available for assistance in welfare matters and is available by making appointments at the front office.

The careers teacher offers a wide range of support to International students including the provisions of career information, university admission requirements and general tertiary study in Australia.

The School Library

Our library is equipped with books, journals, computers and printing facilities for all students. Each afternoon the library remains open until 5:30pm for 'Homework Help' which is there to assist students with their school work. This is a valuable resource for all International Students.

There are school teachers in attendance every afternoon to assist you with any questions that you may have about your class work, homework or assignments.

Learning English

Strathfield Girls High School provides trained EAL/D staff (English as an Additional Language or Dialect) to help students develop their confidence and competence in speaking, reading and understanding English.

All students whose first language is not English will incorporate EAL/D lessons into their learning program.

Speaking English at school and at home is recommended to improve your language skills and understanding. Reading as many newspapers and books as possible is suggested, as well as watching and listening to evening news programs on television to hear correct pronunciation will be of valuable assistance in your learning of the language.

Assimilating into Australian Culture

Greeting People

When meeting someone for the first time, it is usual to shake the person's right hand with your right hand. People who do not know each other generally do not kiss or hug when meeting. When you first meet someone, it is polite not to talk about personal matters.

Many Australians look at the eyes of the people they are talking with. They consider this a sign of respect, and an indication that they are listening. Do not stare at the person for a long time.

You can address a new acquaintance using their title and family name. You may use their first name when they ask you to or use it in the introduction. In the workplace and among friends, most Australians tend to be informal and call each other by their first names.

Clothing Customs

The types of clothing that people wear reflect the diversity in our society just as much as the variation in climate. There are no laws or rules on clothing, but you must wear certain clothing for work situations. Most workplaces have dress standards.

Outside of the work situation, clothing is an individual choice; many people dress for comfort, for the social situation or the weather. Clubs, movie theatres and other places require patrons to be in neat, clean clothes and appropriate footwear.

People from other countries can choose to wear their national dress. They may be religious or customary items and include monks' robe, a burqa, a hijab or a turban. As a multicultural society with people from many different cultures, clothing is a part of cultural beliefs and practices that is encouraged.

Polite Behaviour

'Please' and 'thank you' are words that are very helpful when dealing with other people, and buying goods or services. When asked if you would like something, like a cup of tea, it is polite to say, 'Yes please', or just 'please' if you would like it, or 'no, thank you' if you do not. When you receive something, it is polite to thank the person by saying 'thank you'. Australians tend to think that people who do not say 'please' or 'thank you' are being rude. Using these words will help in building a good relationship.

Sometimes a sensitive issue may come up in conversation. Not to talk may seem rude. It is more polite to say 'sorry, it is too hard to explain' than to ignore a question.

Australians often say, 'Excuse me' to get a person's attention and 'sorry' if we bump into them. We also say, 'Excuse me' or 'pardon me' if we burp or belch in public or a person's home.



Assimilating into Australian Culture

Polite Behaviour

You should always try to be on time for meetings and other visits. If you realise you are going to be late, try to contact the person to let them know. This is very important for visits to professionals as you may be charged money for being late or if you miss the appointment without notifying them before the appointment time.

Working Rights

Students applying for a student visa to study are not automatically granted permission to work in Australia.

You can only apply for permission to work after you have arrived in Australia and commenced your studies. Before you can apply for a work visa you will need the approval of the Principal, Ms Lyris. If permission is given by the Principal, you can apply for a work visa. If you are granted a work visa you are limited to working a maximum of 10 hours per week during term time.

Overseas Student Health Cover

Health insurance is compulsory for all international students and your first premium needs to be paid before your student visa is issued.

The doctor will ask you for payment at the time of your visit and you will be given a receipt. You should take the receipt to a Medibank Private office where you will receive a refund.

Culture Shock

When you first live in a new country, it is fun to see the differences and to learn how to do things differently. Sometimes, however, those differences can make you feel tired and confused. Everything seems different, nothing feels familiar or comfortable. When those feelings become too much for you, you are experiencing “culture shock”.

Culture shock happens to all international students at some stage, and it does not mean that you have failed, or that you won't get through it. You should talk about how you feel. There are many people in the school who can help you to understand your feelings. If you write down what is bothering you in a journal, that can help too.

As you improve your language skills and you become more familiar with your new surroundings, you will feel more comfortable and less isolated. You are likely to become more interested in the people around you and even come to laugh about the little things that once bothered you. Be patient - you will soon be well on your way to adjusting to life in Australia.

dream, believe, inspire, achieve...

Australian Slang

Much common word usage or 'slang' may seem strange to people new to Australia. Slang words start from many different sources. Some words are shortened versions of longer words. If you are unsure what an expression means, it is all right to ask the person who said it to explain what they mean. Some common expressions are:

- **Cuppa**—This is the abbreviated form of the phrase “a cup of tea.” ‘Drop by this arvo for a cuppa’ means please come and visit this afternoon for a cup of tea or coffee.
- **Maccas**—This is the abbreviated term for McDonald’s.
- **Arvo**—This is short for afternoon. ‘Drop by this arvo,’ means please come and visit this afternoon.
- **Straya**—Slang for Australia.
- **Footy**—Slang for Football/Rugby.
- **Biccy**— Slang for Biscuit.
- **Choccy**— Slang for Chocolate. “Would you like a choccy biccy?” means would you like a chocolate biscuit?
- **Devo**—Devastated is often shortened to Devo.
- **Servo**—Service station/Gas Station.
- **Prezzie**—The short version of the noun present. “ Please open your birthday prezzie”.
- **Bring a plate** — when you are invited to a party and asked to 'bring a plate', this means to bring a dish of food to share with your host and other guests. Take the food to the party in any type of dish, not just a plate, and it is usually ready to serve. This is common for communal gatherings such as for school or work. If you are unsure what to bring, you can ask the host.
- **Fortnight** —This term describes a period of two weeks.
- **Barbeque, BBQ, barbie**— outdoor cooking, usually of meat or seafood over a grill or hotplate using gas or coals. The host serves the meat with salads and bread rolls.
- **Snag**— The raw type sausages usually cooked at a BBQ. They can be made of pork, beef or chicken.
- **Chook**— The term chook means a chicken, usually a hen.
- **Loo or dunny** — These are slang terms for toilet. If you are a guest in someone's house for the first time, it is usually polite to ask permission to use his or her toilet. 'May I use your toilet please?' Some people ask, 'Where's the loo?'
- **Fair dinkum**— honest, the truth. 'Fair dinkum?' when used as a question means, 'is it really true?'
- **To be crook**—to be sick or ill.
- **Flat out**— to be busy.
- **Bloke** — a man. Sometimes if you ask for help, you may get an answer to 'see that bloke over there'.
- **How ya goin? 'How are you going?'** - means how are you, or how do you do? It does not mean what form of transport you are taking.

Personal and Public Safety



Sydney is a safe place to live but you should be aware of your surroundings to assist you in remaining safe. On most occasions you will be with a group of your fellow students and teachers e.g. sports teams, excursions, school socials and weekend activities. When you are out and about it is important to be alert and aware of your personal safety. Some general rules are shown below should you find yourself alone or your group has reduced in numbers.

At night remember:

- Think ahead - consider how you are going to get home - what about pre-booking a taxi or arranging transport with a friend or family member?
- Never hitch-hike.
- Make sure that you stay with your group and that someone knows where you are at all times.
- Make sure you have enough money to get back to your house or to a phone.
- Keep away from trouble - if you see any trouble or suspect that it might be about to start move away from the scene if you can. The best thing you can do is to alert the police and keep away.
- Walk purposely and try to appear confident. Be wary of casual requests from strangers, like someone asking for a cigarette or change as they could have other motives.
- Try not to carry your wallet where it is vulnerable and in clear view.

At any time off the School Campus:

- Be alert to your surroundings and the people around you, especially if you are alone or it is dark.
- Whenever possible, travel with a friend or as part of a group.
- Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible.
- Walk confidently and at a steady pace.
- Do not respond to conversation from strangers on the street or in a car - just continue walking.
- Be aware of your surroundings, and avoid using ipods or radios when walking alone - you might not hear someone approaching.
- Always keep your school bag/handbag in view and close to your body.
- Be discrete with your cash or mobile phones in public.
- If you do not have a mobile phone, make sure that you have a phone card or change to make a phone call, but remember **emergency 000 calls are free of charge.**

(Source: Australian Federal Police)

Personal and Public Safety

Public Transport Safety

Travelling on public transport should be a safe and comfortable experience. Numerous security measures have been adopted to maximise the safety of travellers including: security officers, police, guards, help points, good lighting and security cameras.

Alcohol, Smoking, & Drugs

Strathfield Girls High School does not condone the inappropriate use of any drugs and alcohol and does not permit the possession and use of prohibited substances by students at any time. If you are found in possession or under the influence of alcohol and/or prohibited drugs there are a number of consequences that could apply:

- a) Expelled from School
- b) Visa cancelled
- c) Arrest
- d) Prison
- e) Deportation

Alcohol use is legal for those aged 18 years or over. There are laws governing how alcohol may be used in each State and Territory of Australia.

Making New Friends

Strathfield Girls High School is a happy, welcoming community in which you will make many friends, but you will need to be cautious yet open and tolerant when beginning a new friendship. The school provides a culturally diverse mix of students and allows for girls to make friends with a wide range of people.

Be kind to yourself - remember that making friends takes time. If you make the most of social opportunities, just as you would back home, it will be quicker and easier for you to fit in, make friends and feel at home.

If a stranger starts talking to you, they are probably just being friendly. But be safe, and don't give them any of your personal details like your full name, your phone number or your address.

Many international students spend time socialising with other students and people from their own country and culture while they're in Australia. These people can make you feel accepted and you may be able to communicate much more easily with them than you can with locals, particularly when you have just arrived. When everything around you is new and different, it can feel like a big relief to find people from your own country and cultural background. But remember, you need to be careful at first, until you get to know them better, just as you should with anyone else. Even though you may feel like you have a lot in common, remain cautious until you feel you know them reasonably well and can trust them. Crimes against international students are sometimes committed by people who are known to them.



Personal and Public Safety

Homestay 24 Hour Hotline

If you are living in homestays, you can contact your homestay host and/or parent nominated carer when you need help.

Your homestay company will also have a 24 hour hotline that you can call. Contact your International Student Coordinator if you do not know which company is your homestay provider.

Auzzie Families Homestay Care

Contact: Ms Gloria Wang
Phone: (+61 2) 9804 4700
Mobile: 0419 628 168 (24 hours)
Email: jun@auzziefamilies.com

Website: www.auzziefamilies.com

Oz Homestay

Contact: Ms Elizabeth Walmsley
Phone: (+61 2) 9325 6988
Mobile: 0421 556 374 (24 hours)
Email: lizwalmsley@ozhomestay.com.au

Website: www.ozhomestay.com.au

Global Experience

Contact: Agnes Ong
Phone: (+612) 9264 4022
Mobile: 0420 530 112 (24 hours)
Email: agnes@globalexperience.com.au

Website: www.globalexperience.com.au

StayDownUnder

Contact: Mr Gerard and Mrs Rachel Whyte
Phone: (+61 2) 8901 4499
Mobile: 0410 761 499 (24 hours)
Email: info@staydownunder.com.au

Website: www.staydownunder.com.au



Important Safety Tips

When you are out with friends or by yourself, here are some simple things to remember:

- Always **plan your trip** home, especially at night. You may want to pre-book a taxi or arrange transport with a friend. Always make sure you have enough money to get home.
- **Avoid staying out past 8pm.**
- If you have a part-time job, **do not work during school nights** Monday – Thursday and return home by 9pm on weekends.
- Try to **travel with a friend** or in a group at night.
- **Keep your bag** and belongings **close to your body** and where you can always see them.
- **Leave valuables at home** if you don't need to take them with you. This includes jewellery, electronic equipment such as your laptop and your passport.
- **Do not carry large amounts of money** with you. You can take money out at ATMs found in shops, supermarkets, petrol stations, shopping malls, shop fronts and many other public places.
- **Do not accept parcels** that do not directly belong to you. You will be held legally responsible for the contents of the parcels.
- **Do not pay for school fees through people who offer discounts.** This is a SCAM.
- **Call 000 in the event of an emergency.** Remember, calls to 000 are free of charge.

Did you know?

You must let your school know of **any change of your address and contact details as soon as possible and within 7 days**. It is a student visa requirement, and will help to keep you safe if the school knows where you live and how to contact you in case of emergency.

Cyber Safety

When using the internet, like anywhere in the world, you should protect yourself against spam, online scams, identity theft and online bullying. Protect yourself by following these tips:

- If you are using a public computer, make sure you **log out of your online accounts** such as your social media account, bank or email accounts, and log out of your computer account before you walk away.
- **Do not give away your personal information.** This includes your name, phone number, address, email address, date of birth, usernames and passwords, and bank details.
- If you think you're being harassed or bullied online, **report the person being abusive** to the website or social media administrators and talk to someone you trust straight away — such as a parent, teacher or friend, or contact **Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800)**
- **Ignore, block or mute** the person being abusive online and do not engage with them



You can find more information on the Kids Helpline website at:

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/online-harassment>

Road Safety and Public Transport Safety

- Where available, use pedestrian walkways and only cross the street at pedestrian crossings or lights.
- Watch for traffic before you cross by looking left and right for oncoming cars.
- Do not use your mobile phone or put on your ear phones when you are crossing the road.
- Avoid isolated bus, rail and light rail stops.

Public transport is reliable and widely used in Australia, particularly in metro and urban areas. A number of security measures have been implemented to maximise the safety of public transport users including security officers and guards, help points, good lighting and security cameras. However you should still use caution when travelling on public transport:

- Check transport timetables to avoid long waits, particularly at night. You can download an app on your mobile phone such as **TripView**, **TripGo** or **TransitTimes** to view timetables of public transport and plan your trip.
- If you find yourself left in a train carriage on your own or with only one other person you may feel more comfortable moving to another carriage closer to the guard or driver.



Train carriages nearest to the driver or guard have a blue light on it and are safest at night.

Safety Apps

The **Emergency Plus app** is a national emergency app that you can use to get help as soon as possible in an emergency situation.

It tells you the exact location on the map and the GPS coordinates that you can read to the operator when you call the emergency service.



Water Safety

- Only **swim between the red and yellow flags** on the beach. This is the area where lifeguards and lifesavers patrol to keep you safe. No Flags = No Swim
- Look for, read and **obey water safety signs**.
- **Never swim alone** at the beach.
- Check water conditions and water depth before swimming – never dive head first.
- Never bathe and swim directly after eating or under the influence of drugs including alcohol.
- Learn how to spot a **rip current** and keep clear of the area.
- Always **use sunscreen** to protect exposed skin, put on a shirt, wear sunglasses and a hat when not swimming, and drink plenty of water.



Spot and Survive a rip current

Rip currents are the number one hazard on Australian beaches. The things to look for are deeper, dark-coloured water; fewer breaking waves; a rippled surface surrounded by smooth waters; and anything floating out to sea or foamy, discoloured, sandy, water flowing out beyond the waves.

If you are caught in a rip: **stay calm, float with the current, call out HELP** and **raise an arm** to gain attention of nearby surfers or lifeguards.



Learn about how to spot a **rip** and what to do when you are caught in a rip from the videos (multi-languages) on the **Beachsafe** website: <https://beachsafe.org.au/surf-safety/ripcurrents>

Reporting Incidents and Seeking Help

Bullying, assaults and harassments of any forms are not tolerated in Australia. If you have experienced any form of assault (either sexually or physically), harassment or any abuse, or think you are in danger of being assaulted, use the following services:

1. If you are in immediate danger, or wish to report an incident:

Police/Ambulance/Fire Brigade at 000

2. If you need help at school:

- Your **International Student Coordinator** [insert name of teacher] at [location]
- **School Counsellor** [name of counsellor] at [room]

3. If you are concerned for your safety, and you feel you need to speak to someone for support, or for information on any support services that you can use:

- **Kids Helpline** is a free, private and confidential 24/7 phone line and online counselling service for young people. Call **1800 55 1800** or email counsellor@kidshelpline.com.au or visit www.kidshelpline.com.au for more information.
- **Bullying. NoWay!** provides information and helpful ideas about bullying: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>
- **1800RESPECT** is a confidential information, counselling and support service for sexual assault victims and domestic violence. Call 1800 737 732 (24 hours) or visit their website at www.1800respect.org.au
Ask for an interpreter if you wish to speak in your own language that is not English.



You and the Law

The laws in Australia can be very different from your home country.

For example:

- It is illegal to consume alcohol if you are under 18 years of age
- It is illegal to purchase cigarettes if you are under 18 years of age
- Possession and use of illegal drugs is a criminal offence

Visit the website www.lawstuff.org.au for information about laws relating to you.

Driving

You need to be at least 16 years old to be a Learner (L Plater) for driving a car. For car drivers, you can attempt a Driving Test to get your P1 (red) licence once you have turned 17 and you:

- have been on your L's for at least 12 months
- have logged at least 120 hours driving time which includes 20 hours night-time driving.

If you are driving a car on a Learner (yellow) or P1 (red) licence:

- You must not drive faster than 90 km per hour
- You must have a zero blood alcohol limit
- You must not use any functions of a mobile phone including hands-free devices while driving.
- You must not drive with more than one **passenger** under 21 between the hours of 11pm and 5am.



If you are driving a car on a P2 (green) licence:

- You must have a zero blood alcohol level
- You must not exceed a maximum speed limit of 100 km/h



- Driving without a licence is illegal
- Seatbelts are compulsory for drivers and passengers in Australia.
- Speeding and drink driving are dangerous and are against the law.
- You could lose your licence or go to jail if you are caught speeding or drink driving.

Useful Websites

ISC:

<https://www.deinternational.nsw.edu.au/>

(This is linked to the DoE website under Information for Overseas Students)

ESOS Act and National Code:

www.deewr.gov.au

Work permit application

www.immi.gov.au/study/working/index

Overseas student health cover:

www.medibank.com.au

International Students Advisers National Association (ISANA):

www.isana.org.au

Australian National Anthem



Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are young and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;
Our home is girt by sea;
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare;
In history's page, let every stage
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross
We'll toil with hearts and hands;
To make this Commonwealth of ours
Renowned of all the lands;
For those who've come across the seas
We've boundless plains to share;
With courage let us all combine
To Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

HARMONY



It's up to us!



STRATHFIELD GIRLS

A LANGUAGES HIGH SCHOOL

Donated by
YEAR 12 2017





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