

# International Students – Support Services, Orientation and Critical Incident Policy

ESOS Standard 5 and 6

- All of Brighton Grammar School's policies are intended to be up to date and be consistent with all relevant laws.
- Employees are expected to comply with all applicable policies.
- Various parts of the policies require managers and staff to exercise discretion and the policies are not intended to be applied in a legalistic or prescriptive manner.
- These policies may be varied by Brighton Grammar School from time to time, at its absolute discretion.
- Brighton Grammar School is fully committed to the protection of children and young people during all School activities and environments both within and outside of School hours.
- This is a whole of school policy and there may, from time to time, be variations in different parts of the School. In such circumstances, advice will be issued by the relevant Head of School

## Introduction

The Education Services for Overseas Student (ESOS) Act sets out the legal framework governing delivery of education to International students studying in Australia on a student visa. Within the ESOS legislative framework are the standards to ensure quality with which Brighton Grammar School must comply in order to retain registration as an educational provider for an International Student.

**Standard 5, Younger Overseas Students, ensures the welfare and safety of all students studying in Australia when under the age of 18.**

**Standard 6, Overseas Student Support Services, requires the educational provider to provide information to International students regarding their safety via a Critical Incident Policy.**

## Purpose

Brighton Grammar School acknowledges the cultural and social challenges faced by students from overseas countries while studying in Australia. These students at times may require additional support services as they are living and studying in an unfamiliar environment. Brighton Grammar School is responsible for providing access to services to ensure the mental and physical wellbeing of each international student studying with BGS.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process in place to support an international student studying at Brighton Grammar and the managing of critical incidents involving International students.

# Orientation of an International Student

## General Information

Brighton Grammar School will provide each international student, their family and where required their homestay host, with detailed information on remaining safe and healthy while studying at BGS and while living in Australia.

This includes information regarding:

- Study requirements including study support programs
- Extra-curricular opportunities
- EAL support programs that can be accessed
- Student Code of Conduct and expected behaviours while studying at BGS
- Student Safety while studying in Australia, including information on:
  - What the Child Protection laws in Australia mean to the student
  - Social etiquette and expectations
  - Water Safety
  - Public transport
  - After dark precautions
- Visa conditions and expectations highlighting attendance requirements and progress expectations
- Child Safety
- Available support services: School Counsellors, health services and assistance phone lines e.g Headspace, Kidshelp line
- BGS Emergency contacts (also provided via the student safety card) including critical incident management and assistance
- An overview of local amenities and general information e.g. public transport, beach, and shopping

All students will be provided with a Student Safety card at their orientation. They will also be asked to record important numbers in their mobile phone (in the case of the junior school this will be the parent's phone).

## Orientation of a Student in Primary Studies

Our younger students must be accompanied to school on their first day by their parent.

The Junior School orientation program is carried out over a period of time to ensure students are not overwhelmed and can adjust to their new environment. The program encompasses:

1. Meeting with Deputy Headmaster, Head of Junior School
2. Tour of the school (unless done prior to enrolment)
3. Uniform purchasing assistance (if required)
4. Meeting of homeroom teacher
5. Meeting of specialist staff – Art, Music, Sport Teachers

Younger students will be monitored daily for the first weeks of their schooling to ensure they are settling in and supported.

All Orientation programs will be recorded on the **Orientation Checklist for International Students – Junior school**. This document will be uploaded to the student file in the school database and retained for a minimum of 2 years after the completion of studies at BGS.

### **Orientation of a Student in Secondary Studies**

Our Secondary School students' orientation will be overseen by the Director of Students and Head of Transition.

The Director of Students, Head of Transition or delegate will work through the Transition Checklist to ensure all topics are covered with the student and parent prior to commencement and within the first week of studies.

During the orientation the student and parent/host will be introduced to the International Liaison Officer who will support both the parent and student with settling in to their new environment.

The support of an interpreter for Chinese and Japanese students is available if required.

All Orientation sessions will be recorded on the **New Student 8-12 Transition Checklist**. This document will be uploaded to the student file in the school database and retained for a minimum of 2 years after the completion of studies at BGS.

## School Support Services

Brighton Grammar School will provide all international students with support in mental and physical health and wellbeing both during school hours and, if needed, after hours.

The International Liaison Officer is the official point of contact should a student need support however students also have access to the BGS Counsellors and all external health services such as 'Headspace' for mental health support when needed.

When studying at Brighton Grammar School all students are allocated a 'House'. The student's House Tutor and Head of House are responsible for the pastoral care of the student. The Head of House will liaise with parents, guardians, homestay families and the International Liaison officer to ensure international students are provided with any assistance needed.

### Supporting Younger Students

The care and welfare of students is a priority for Brighton Grammar School and the school will ensure that all international students will have the appropriate levels of welfare and care prior to, and while attending BGS.

Brighton Grammar School will only enrol students under the age of 13 if they are residing in Australia with their parent/s. BGS will not engage in any conversation regarding homestay arrangements for students in the Junior School or under 13.

All students studying at Brighton Grammar School under a CAAW homestay arrangement will be introduced to the International Liaison Officer and be allocated a BGS staff member to be their support person. Both the International Liaison officer and support person will ensure that the student is cared for at all times and has appropriate levels of welfare and wellbeing. If the parents wish to also engage with an external support person the school will support this decision and work with this extra support, however, the responsibility of the student will always remain with the school.

The International Liaison Officer will visit all international students and their families (or homestay homes) regularly to ensure that the student is safe, supported and cared for at home. *Note: see the BGS Homestay policy for further details on this arrangement.*

If, for any reason the school can not maintain a homestay welfare arrangement with the student the school will immediately contact the student's family to seek alternate arrangements. The school will continue to provide welfare and care arrangements until other arrangements can be confirmed and put in place.

### Supporting Parents and Families

Brighton Grammar School encourages international students to reside with their parents when studying in Australia and offers parent and family support in order to further assist in the transition in to the BGS community.

The Brighton Grammar School International Liaison Officer welcomes all International parents and families to Brighton Grammar prior to school commencement and assists all family members, mothers in particular, with integration in to the community. The International Liaison officer will coordinate activities such as:

- Assistance in English language lessons and/or language translation assistance

- Community engagement and participation
- Wellbeing support

### **Course Progress and Attendance**

It is expected that all students including international students maintain regular attendance at school both during school time and for any co-curricular after school activities in which they chose to participate. APS Sports on a Saturday morning is a compulsory activity that all secondary school students must partake in.

Under the ESOS Act, registered providers are required to notify both students and the Australian Government when students have breached their student visa conditions as a result of having failed to maintain satisfactory course progress or attendance.

Should a critical incident affect the international student's ability to attend the course or satisfactorily complete the course, the School will advise the relevant authority of such event to ensure that visa conditions are not breached.

### **Academic Concerns**

If students have concerns with their attendance, academic performance or other related issues that are placing them at risk of not achieving the requirements of their course they should contact their House Tutor, Head of House. If a student is living in homestay accommodation they can also contact the International Liaison Officer for support.

All students' progress and attendance are monitored and guidance and support provided, where unsatisfactory results are identified.

# Critical Incidents

## Definition

The National Code defines a critical incident as *'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'*. This does not include serious academic misconduct.

Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:

- Missing students
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Death, serious injury or any threat of these
- Natural disaster
- Issues such as domestic violence, physical, sexual or other abuse
- Other non-life-threatening events

All students are provided age and culturally appropriate information regarding safety at school and outside of school while living and studying in Australia. This information and support are provided as part of the orientation process and through out ongoing activities within the classroom as part of the wellbeing curriculum.

## Critical Incident Whilst at School

Should a whole school incident occur onsite at BGS, all students, including international students will follow the instructions of their classroom teacher and emergency wardens in line with the schools Emergency Management Plan.

If a health or safety incident occur involving an individual student whilst on the School grounds, during the course of a School day or during a school related activity, the student should present to the school First Aid room or seek assistance from their House Tutor (classroom teacher in Junior school), Head of House (Deputy Headmaster in Junior School), Director of Student or school counsellor.

The School will follow all Health and Safety protocols as specified within school policies in order to ensure the health and safety of the student, this may include the contacting of emergency services or DHHS if required.

If such an incident occurs that results in the potential breach of visa conditions, the School will advise the relevant authority within 24 hours.

## Critical Incident Outside of School Hours

Should an incident occur to an international student outside of normal School hours and whilst not involved in a school related activity, the student should contact the BGS International Liaison Officer in the first instance.

If they cannot contact the International Liaison Officer then the Director of Students will be available to support the student. All contact details for out of hours emergencies are provided to all international students and their parents via the BGS Student Safety card.

The International Liaison Officer is required to communicate with the School immediately regarding all incidents involving an International Student, so that details can be recorded in accordance with the ESOS standards.

Brighton Grammar School will endeavour to manage and resolve all incidents with the student and their family or homestay providers in a timely manner.

As soon as the school is informed of the incident, the Headmaster or delegated authority will contact any appropriate emergency services and/or 000 for support.

The students nominated school support person or Director of Students will contact the student's parents to explain the situation and to ensure them the safety and wellbeing of the student is priority.

The Director of Students will then contact the following people and establish an emergency communication group:

- Appropriate Head of School
- International Liaison Coordinator
- Homestay family (if applicable)
- Nominated school support person assigned to support the student and family
- School Psychologist
- Risk and Compliance team
- School Health officer (If deemed necessary by the Director of Students)
- Head of House

The Compliance Coordinator and School Psychologist will contact the appropriate authorities such as DHHS, Department of Home Affairs and if necessary local counselling groups.

## **Missing Student**

If a student is not in attendance at school the school will contact the parent or host family before midday to seek an explanation. All reasonable attempts will be made to contact and locate the student immediately. If the student cannot be contacted and the school has concerns for his welfare as a result of the non-contact the Director of Students will engage the relevant emergency services such as the police to assist.

The school will then contact the parents, homestay hosts and appropriate government departments to report the situation and seek assistance. The Director of students will convene the emergency communication group to assist in the immediate situation and to offer further ongoing support to the student and family once the situation has been resolved.

## Ongoing Support

A post incident debrief will be undertaken with the emergency communication group and Headmaster once the incident has been resolved.

Ongoing support will be provided to the student and family, this may include:

- Supporting the student through ongoing medical treatment whether physical or psychological
- Working with the family and homestay provider to ensure ongoing safety
- Finding alternative accommodation if required, including placing the child with an approved relative if CAAW arrangements can no longer be kept in place
- Advising and working with Immigration departments to assist with or resolve any underlying issues
- Assisting the student academically
- Consultation with the student and parent to establish a mutually agreeable outcome should the student be unable to complete their studies due to the incident.

If CAAW arrangements are compromised as a result of any Critical Incident, the school will work closely with the student and family to seek immediate and alternate arrangements in order to maintain the ongoing safety and welfare of the student. This may include placing the child with an approved relative and notifying immigration of the situation (within 24 hours).

If a course transfer, cancellation or suspension has resulted due to an incident, procedures outlined in the 'Transfer, suspend and cancel policy' will be enacted, this includes the communication of subsequent arrangements to the required authorities and in PRISMS. However, the school will continue to be responsible for the welfare of the students until all arrangements are finalised.

All communications including timelines of key contacts and communications will be documented by the Director of Students and kept on the students file for a minimum of 2 years following the completion of study.

### Documents to support this policy

- Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct
- Orientation Checklist JS
- New Student 8-12 Transition Checklist
- Student Safety card
- Transfer, suspend and cancel enrolments