



Mercury Bay Area School

Information for International Students Booklet



Contents	Page
What are the advantages of an MBAS package?	3
What about Whitianga / Mercury Bay?	3
What can the MBAS offer?	
◆ Subjects	4
◆ Qualifications	4
◆ Sports	4
◆ Cultural activities	5
◆ Accommodation	
◆ Terms and Conditions of Homestay	5
◆ MBAS International Student Accommodation Procedure	6-8
What support does MBAS provide to International Students?	
◆ General Support	9
◆ Change of details	9
Further essential information and support	
◆ Eligibility for health services	10
◆ Medical and travel insurance	10
◆ Immigration	10
◆ Code of Practice	10
Further conditions and restrictions	
◆ Conditions of acceptance	11
◆ Withdrawal from school	11
◆ Attendance requirements	11
◆ Refund conditions	11
◆ Fee Protection Policy	11
◆ Termination of tuition	12
◆ Driver's Policy	12
How can you apply? Application Procedure	13
Contact details	13

What are the advantages of a MBAS package?

- ◆ Mercury Bay Area School has been serving the communities of Whitianga and Mercury Bay area for over 40 years.
- ◆ We are the largest Area School in New Zealand and offer a wide and challenging curriculum for students aged 5-19 years. Our students have achieved at national level in sporting, academic and cultural areas.
- ◆ We offer additional learning opportunities for subjects such as music, dance, drama and ICT.
- ◆ We have ICT suites, a growing number of newly installed purpose-built classrooms, a library, a swimming pool, gymnasiums and other facilities.
- ◆ We offer an English Language class for senior students (subject choice dependent on numbers)
- ◆ We provide a safe and welcoming environment where physical abuse, bullying, alcohol, smoking, drugs and substance abuse are not tolerated.
- ◆ We provide caring and supportive home-stay families.
- ◆ Most home-stays are within walking distance of the school or accessible on our free school bus system.
- ◆ We offer a less expensive package than many Auckland schools.
- ◆ We are located in a thriving coastal town surrounded by mountains and forest.
- ◆ There are a numerous sporting and cultural clubs and activities available in town and MBAS offers an outstanding range and depth of sporting opportunities.
- ◆ MBAS has achieved impressive sporting achievements at local, regional and national levels.

What about Mercury Bay and Whitianga?

Whitianga is a thriving and expanding town on the east coast of the Coromandel Peninsula. It has been attracting visitors for more than a thousand years since the Maori explorer, Kupe, first settled here in 950AD. It was Captain James Cook who gave the area its name when he anchored in the Bay in 1769 to observe the transit of Mercury.

Today many of the local businesses and industries are focused on the marine and rural environment, particularly fishing and tourism. Seen by many as one of the most beautiful areas in New Zealand the town is bordered by the Pacific ocean and a range of accessible and picturesque ranges. This unique landscape offers a multitude of outdoor pursuits and water sports.

The town has a very active population and many are engaged in sporting and cultural activities. Clubs for every interest including rugby, game fishing, sailing, archery, tennis, squash, choir are all welcoming of new members. The town has a cinema, numerous high quality restaurants and cafes and is home once a year to the now internationally famous Seafood Festival.

Whitianga is a safe and vibrant town being only 2 and a half hours drive from Auckland on the Pacific Coast Highway it offers a welcome respite from the city.

For more information about the Whitianga and the Coromandel region please go to the following websites:

www.whitianga.co.nz

www.allaboutwhitianga.co.nz/

www.thecoromandel.com

What can Mercury Bay Area School offer?

Subjects

- ◆ MBAS offers a full and comprehensive range of subjects at all levels.
- ◆ We have a strong, dedicated and professional teaching staff delivering quality programmes for students of all ages. Specialist departments offer core subjects of English, Mathematics, Sciences, Food and Materials Technology, Hospitality, Social Studies, Computing, Visual and Performing Arts, Photography, Music and Physical Education.
- ◆ Year 11,12 and 13 students can also select from a range of innovative and exciting specialist courses designed to help them look beyond the classroom and prepare for their futures. The Marine Academy and Outdoor Education programmes are one to three year courses. Please see the Full Curriculum Guide for 2022 on our website <https://sites.google.com/mbas.ac.nz/senior-years-course-guide-2022/home>
- Y11,Y12 and Y13 students must take 6 subjects.
- On arrival, International Students wishing to gain a university entrance qualification during their time at MBAS will be assessed on their level of English.
- If their English is at the Elementary or Pre-Intermediate Level they will be offered extra English tuition or course at the students cost.
- The school reserves the right to decide the appropriate course enrolment particularly if the student is not at the requisite level.
- The school does its best to place students in the subjects they choose.

Qualifications

Studying in New Zealand this information can be found in different languages on:

<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Publications/Brochures/Study-in-New-Zealand-english.pdf>

MBAS offers the following qualifications:

- ◆ NCEA Level 1
- ◆ NCEA Level 2
- ◆ NCEA Level 3

Understanding NCEA go to <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/understanding-ncea/>

Sports

Our students are often multi-talented sports people and we pride ourselves on the extensive co-curricular and sporting opportunities on offer. In addition to the traditional range of team and individual sports, school resources enable the students to use the local environment for activities such as kayaking, camping and tramping. We can offer a unique opportunity for our students to be recognised at national level through the Area Schools Sports Association.

Extended trips to the snow fields of Mount Ruapehu for winter Outdoor Education, mid year diving trip as part of the Marine Academy Programme and opportunities aboard the sailing ship Spirit of New Zealand are also on offer.

Cultural Activities

Low cost music tuition is available for most musical instruments from trained teachers– join a school band.

Every second year the school puts on a major musical production and there are many opportunities to perform or get involved with the production teams.

We have a refurbished and well stocked library.

Our town has library (with free wifi), a twin cinema and numerous arts and craft groups.

Accommodation

International students must live in a home-stay which has been police vetted and approved by the International Student Homestay co-ordinator– Marie Wilson

The homestay fee includes 3 meals a day, seven days a week, a room of your own and full use of the facilities of the house. The only extra costs are for your phone calls to other towns and countries (local calls are free) and your internet use(dependent on the family's internet package).

Most New Zealand families live in detached houses on a plot of land with a lawn and gardens. Your family might have other children, but not always. Most of our home-stay families live in Whitianga itself so you will be able to walk to school; if they live outside the town there will be a free school bus each day to get you to and from school.

If you enrol we will help you settle into your home-stay. Our International Student Director will organise your transport from the airport and then come to your home-stay the next day. If you have any problems with your home-stay, she will be able to help you. If you are really not happy in your home-stay, she will find you another home to live in.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF HOMESTAY

The provision of homestay accommodation for international students attending Mercury Bay Area School ("School") by the homestay parents ("Host") shall be on the following terms and conditions.

1. The Student shall pay to the Host an agreed amount per week. This payment shall be paid in advance while the Host is providing homestay accommodation to an international student enrolled at the School ("Student").
2. A duly appointed representative of the School shall have reasonable access to the homestay accommodation and facilities.
3. The Host shall keep the School informed of matters concerning the Student including matters relating to the health, wellbeing or safety of the Student such as accidents, behavioural concerns or absences without reasonable explanation. The Host shall provide such other information relating to the Student as may be reasonably requested by the School from time to time.
4. The Host agrees that the Student is to abide by school rules relating to international students as may be amended by the School from time to time.
5. The Host agrees that the student will not own or drive a car.
6. Any extra costs or expenses incurred voluntarily by the Host family or friend as a result of providing homestay for a student, are the responsibility of the Host. Examples of such costs might be: including the homestay student in a family outing to a restaurant and associated transport costs; taking the student to the cinema; replacement of clothing badly damaged through laundering etc.
7. In the event that the student's behaviour in the homestay becomes unacceptable to the host family, the Homestay Coordinator must be informed immediately.
8. Either party may terminate the homestay arrangement, without the need to provide reasons, upon giving to the other party one week's notice, except as in the case described in clause 9.3 below.
9. The School may at its discretion remove the Student from the homestay accommodation without notice and terminate the homestay arrangement immediately if:
 - 9.1 in the School's reasonable opinion the safety or the wellbeing of the Student is in doubt;
 - 9.2 in the School's reasonable opinion the homestay accommodation is affecting the Student's behaviour or academic performance at school.
 - 9.3 When a student is in NZ for a short-term stay of up to one term, and it becomes necessary for Mercury Bay Area School to move the student to another homestay at short notice, in this case the homestay will be paid for only those nights that the student has stayed in the home. There will be no payment made in lieu of notice.
10. All information provided in respect of the Host (including information contained in the application), student or other matters of a confidential nature relating to the homestay shall be held and kept confidential except disclosure of information including the application: (a) to the Student (or prospective student), the Student's guardian and/or parents; (b) to any professional consultant or such other person where it is in the interests of the Student to provide the information; (c) pursuant to any statutory or other legal duty.

11. Should any dispute or difference arise between the parties concerning this agreement or the provision of homestay accommodation the parties agree that they will, in good faith, endeavour to resolve the dispute by consultation and negotiation.
12. The Host's rights and obligations under these terms and conditions may not be assigned without prior written agreement of the School.
13. The School shall not be liable for any costs, expenses, damages or other claims against the Host arising from any acts or omissions of the Student.
14. These terms and conditions may be varied by the School upon written notification from time to time and will continue to apply to the provision of homestay accommodation by the Host until notified otherwise.
15. The Host acknowledges that:
 - (a) personal information of the Host collected or held by the School is provided and may be held, used and disclosed to enable the School to process the application to provide homestay and enable the School to communicate with the Host for any purpose;
 - (b) all personal information provided to the School is collected by and will be held by the School at 20 South Highway; Tel: (07) 8665916
 - (c) If the Host fails to provide any information requested in the application to provide homestay, the School may be unable to process the application;
 - (d) The Host has the right under the Privacy Act 1993 to obtain access to and request any corrections of any personal information held by the School concerning the Host;
 - (e) The Host authorises the School to obtain at any time from any person or entity any information it requires to process and/or accept the application to provide homestay or to perform or complete any of the other purposes under this agreement. The Host authorises any such person to release to the School any personal information that person holds concerning the host.

MERCURY BAY AREA SCHOOL(MBAS) INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ACCOMMODATION PROCEDURE

MBAS undertakes to comply with the accommodation provisions set out in Outcome 6, clauses 21 and 26 of the Code.

The categories of accommodation that will be accepted by the Education Provider are:

- i) Living with a parent
- ii) Living with a designated caregiver
- iii) Living in a homestay
- iv) Temporary accommodation for group students and short courses only

Policy Objectives

1. To provide a suitable living environment conducive to study and a safe and supportive home life.
2. To involve the residential carer in the welfare of a student away from the student's family and home country.
3. To assist the student to successfully integrate into the New Zealand lifestyle.
4. To work towards the overseas parents' peace of mind knowing that the student is well cared for and happy in New Zealand.

Provision of Accommodation

MBAS will arrange accommodation for international students.

Administrative Requirements and Understandings

Use of Accommodation Agents

MBAS may, if necessary, make use of accommodation agents to organise and monitor student accommodation according to the Code.

General

1. Students under 18 years will not be permitted to rent a flat/room/house/apartment or live on their own.
2. All accommodation queries and issues will be dealt with initially by the designated person for accommodation (the Homestay Coordinator). Pastoral care issues or concerns arising from accommodation arrangements will be referred to the Director of International Students.
3. For each student, the full name, current address, contact phone number and relationship to student of the residential caregiver will be held.
4. Any serious concerns relating to accommodation will be reported to the Code Administrator.

Students not living with a parent

For all students under 18 years and not living with a parent:

1. Any accommodation to be used by international students will have:
An on-site assessment to determine that living conditions are of an acceptable standard.
An assessment to determine that the accommodation type is not a boarding establishment, if the student is in a homestay or has a designated caregiver.
An assessment of the residential carer's suitability and whether they will provide a safe physical and emotional environment.
2. Each student will be interviewed at least quarterly to ensure that their accommodation is suitable.
3. All accommodation residences will be visited at least twice yearly to ensure that they remain suitable.
4. Police vetting will be carried out on all adults aged 18 years and over living in a homestay, boarding establishment or Ministry of Education approved hostel accommodation used by a student.
5. MBAS will conduct follow up visits if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the accommodation has become unsuitable. MBAS may remove the student from that accommodation and place in a more suitable home if necessary.

Homestay

1. Students in the school homestay programme must make homestay payments in advance along with their Tuition payment.
2. Students must not make their own private homestay arrangements without the approval of the Director of International Students.
3. Students staying in a homestay are required to exhibit appropriate behaviour.
4. Where a student's behaviour or demands are such that homestay hosts cannot reasonably be expected to have the student continue in their care, they must notify the Homestay Coordinator, MBAS, immediately. The homestay service may be discontinued and the student may be sent home.
5. Where the homestay student wishes to withdraw from a homestay, at least one week's notice must be given to the Director of International Students or Homestay Coordinator and the homestay family.
6. Advice and a support infrastructure for homestay carers will be provided by the Homestay Coordinator.

Designated Caregivers

7. Parents of each student living with a designated caregiver are required to sign an indemnity document stating that the designated caregiver is a relative or close family friend and that the parents have selected the accommodation for their child, subject to **MBAS** approving the accommodation.
8. On or before enrolment, **MBAS** will meet and establish communication with the designated caregiver.
9. The relationship between the designated caregiver and student's parents may be checked to confirm that they are a bona fide relative or parent's friend.
10. The designated caregiver may be asked to complete police vetting. The home may be visited during the year.

Temporary Accommodation

1. Ensure adequate supervision
2. Assess suitability of accommodation
3. Monitoring and managing risks to students
4. Adults aged 18 years and over police vetted

Divisions of Responsibility

MBAS will be responsible for:

- Providing a 24/7 emergency contact person for problems with accommodation.
- Selecting, monitoring and approving all accommodation.
- Providing a support infrastructure for homestay carers.
- Recording the results of all accommodation assessments.
- Recording the results of all quarterly student interviews

Caregivers

MBAS will expect all residential caregivers to:

- Provide a safe and friendly living and studying environment.
- Provide day to day care including:
 - 3 meals a day
 - own room
 - bed and bedding
 - study facilities
 - adequate bedroom furniture to store clothes, books etc.
 - lamp and adequate lighting
 - adequate heating
 - transport arrangements to and from school
 - bathing/showering/bathroom access
 - laundry
- Treat the student with respect.
- Make the student feel comfortable and part of the family.
- Notify MBAS if there are any changes or additions to the household.
- Notify MBAS immediately if there are any problems with the student. e.g. medical condition, misconduct.
- Notify MBAS immediately if the student seems very homesick or depressed.
- Look after the student in their home to the best of their ability.
- Notify the Homestay Coordinator if travelling outside Whitianga for more than one weekend.

Host Families will not be expected to:

- Pay for toll or mobile phone calls.
- Cook special food.
- Insure the student's goods. We do recommend all homestays hold comprehensive household contents insurance. We further recommend that homestays install (and maintain) a smoke alarm.
- Offer accommodation to visiting friends or relatives.
- Comply with unreasonable requests.

What support does MBAS provide for International Students?

Staff: Principal Ross Dunn
Director of International Students/Dean Marie Wilson
& Home-stay Manager

General Support

Transport from the airport to your home-stay will be arranged.

Our International Student Director will meet you at your home-stay and provide you with staff contact details.

Soon after you arrive you will be given an orientation session to help you get to know your new school and town. The International Student Director will show you around the school, explain your timetable, help you set up a bank account, (if you need one), and introduce you to key staff, some of your teachers and fellow students. You will also be given an Orientation Booklet full of useful information.

The Home-stay Manager will meet with you regularly to discuss your home-stay with you. If you have any problems or concerns, she will help you sort these out. She will also assess your home-stay twice a year and talk to your home-stay family and you.

The International Student Director, Mrs Marie Wilson is available at all times for you to see about any problems you might have. She will also give you her mobile phone number so that you can contact her at any time.

Interpreters can be contacted by phone if you ever feel you need to explain something in your own language; we can also arrange for a counsellor who speaks your language to talk to you if necessary.

Change of details

During the orientation period all your details are checked and filed.

It is essential and a requirement of the Code that *should any changes occur* with respect to:

- ◆ contact details
- ◆ type of accommodation or
- ◆ residential address

The school must be immediately notified.

Medical Support

Confidential medical advice and support can be arranged through the services of the School's Guidance Counselling Services. We have a school nurse who can see international students with sexual health problems and any emergencies. Visits to the doctor can also be arranged through these school services, the home-stay parent or the International Student Director.

Accident Insurance

The Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) provides accident insurance for all New Zealand citizens, residents and temporary visitors to New Zealand but you may still be liable for all medical and related costs. Further information can be viewed on the ACC website at <https://www.acc.co.nz/>

Immigration

Full details of visa and permit requirements, advice on rights to employment in New Zealand while studying and reporting requirements are available through the New Zealand Immigration Service and can be viewed on their website at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz>

Code of Practice

MBAS has agreed to observe and be bound by the Education(Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021. Copies of the Code are available on the NZQA website at:

https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Providers-and-partners/Code-of-Practice/Tertiary-and-International-Learners-Code-2021/NZQA_Pastoral-Care-Code-of-Practice_English.pdf

Translations are available in many languages including, Japanese, Korean and Chinese.

Further essential information and support

Eligibility for health services

Most international students are not entitled to publicly funded health services while in New Zealand. If you receive medical treatment during your visit, you may be liable for the full costs of that treatment. Full details of entitlements to publicly-funded health services are available through the Ministry of Health and can be viewed on their website at <https://www.health.govt.nz/>

TB requirements

The New Zealand Immigration Service (NZIS) has introduced new medical screening requirements for student visas and permits. All students who are intending to spend more than six months studying in New Zealand and who:

- Have not previously provided a full medical screening test to the NZIS and ;
- Do not hold a passport from any of the the low TB risk countries or;
- Have lived in or visited for a combined total of three months or more in a country or countries not identified as a low risk country;

Will need to be screened for Tuberculosis (TB)

Medical and Travel Insurance

International students must have appropriate and current medical and travel insurance while studying in New Zealand. MBAS will check the student's insurance on arrival and arrange for approved insurance if necessary.

Students who are already in New Zealand must provide proof of insurance prior to their enrolment being confirmed.

Your travel insurance policy should cover:

- ◆ Loss of baggage and other personal effects
- ◆ Accident and Injury
- ◆ Disruption of travel plans
- ◆ Cost of medical care in any 'stop over' countries

Your medical insurance policy should cover:

- ◆ Hospitalisation
- ◆ Surgery
- ◆ General practitioners' visits
- ◆ Emergency repatriation, including cover of the family members travel costs in assisting any repatriation or expatriation
- ◆ Possibly optical and emergency dental cover

The policy should:

- ◆ Commence the minute the student leaves home(show commencement date)
- ◆ Apply while in transit
- ◆ Apply while the student is in New Zealand(show cover end date)
- ◆ Cover the student for any trips to other countries during the period of study
- ◆ Cover the student for any trips back home to his/her country during the period of study

We are happy to organise Studentsafe insurance cover for students.

<https://www.insurancesafenz.com/studentsafe/student-safe-inbound-young-learners>

Further conditions and restrictions

Conditions of acceptance

MBAS reserves the right to accept or not accept an enrolment for any reason.

The following conditions must be met before acceptance for enrolment:

- Full payment of all fees
- 18 years of age or under
- Satisfactory character reference
- School reports for the previous academic year
- Acceptable standard of English (which will be assessed on arrival)

Withdrawal from school

International Students who wish to withdraw from MBAS must:

1. Provide written approval from their parents or agent
2. Complete the school's leaving form
3. Give home-stay parents two week's notice if this involves terminating their home-stay arrangements.

Attendance requirements

1. The school treats International Students as it does domestic students and the school's policies apply.
2. The International Student Director will contact the home-stay parents in the event of an unexplained absence.
3. Discipline procedures will be applied in the absence of truancy or continuing truancy and the student's parents/and agents will be notified. These can involve:

Or *Visits to the home by the school's Truancy Officer in the case of students under 16 years of age*
Suspension procedures where truancy is deemed to be gross misconduct which is a harmful example to other students

4. Parents and Agents of International Students who are failing to meet course requirements will be contacted promptly.

Refund Conditions

1. To be eligible for a refund an application must be made in writing to the Principal of MBAS by the parent or legal guardian of the student concerned.
2. The application must clearly state the reason for the withdrawal of the student.
3. If the application is made before the student arrives in New Zealand, a full refund will be given less the Registration Fee and Homestay Administration Fee.
4. In determining any refund the Principal and BOT will take into consideration the special circumstances of the student and :
 - costs incurred by the school to provide tuition
 - costs to the school/Dept incurred enrolling the student and finding a home-stay.
 - payments made to the New Zealand Government
6. The principles of fairness and natural justice will be applied when considering any claim for a refund.

Fees Protection Policy

Student fees paid in advance are protected in the event student fees are to be refunded.

All student fees paid to Mercury Bay Area school in advance are accounted for under special ledger codes to enable the school to refund the portion of unused fees owed to any fee-paying international student should the school be unable to continue to offer the course the student is enrolled in/ the school ceases to be a signatory or the school ceases to be a provider.

Termination of tuition

International Students have the same rights as domestic students. However, they must also follow the additional rules outlined in the Enrolment contract which is signed by parents and the student on enrolment.

They cannot be excluded from the school other than in accordance with the Stand Down and Suspension provisions of the Education Act.

The decision to suspend a student will be made by the Principal on the grounds of gross misconduct or continual disobedience.

In addition, when a decision is made to exclude a student from the school's homes-stay arrangements, and this necessitates a return home, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The agent and parents of the International Student will be notified of the matters causing concern.
2. A decision will be made as to whether the student should be given permission to enrol with another provider in New Zealand. If permission is not granted, then NZ Immigration will be notified.
3. The Principal's decision can be referred to the Board of Trustees when the student has been suspended or removed from the home-stay.
4. The student has the right to attend the hearing and to be represented, as provided by the 1989 Education Act

Driver's Policy

Any International Student at MBAS may not own or drive any type of motor vehicle unless the student is learning to drive with a registered driving instructor having first obtained permission from the parents and the International Student Director. (Application to drive to the Principal)

Students may not travel in any vehicle driven by an unlicensed person.

Application Procedure

Please read the following and download the relevant forms:

1. Student sends a completed and signed International Student Application and Contract for Enrolment form to MBAS by email.
2. MBAS reviews the application and sends a Conditional Offer of Place. If the application is unsuccessful, the student will be advised.
3. After carefully reading all the MBAS information booklet (below), the student and parents/legal guardian pay the invoice.
4. MBAS sends a Confirmed Offer of Place and receipt of payments to the student.
5. The student applies for a student visa and then advises MBAS of the details of the flight he/she will arrive on. Details of transfer from the airport to the home-stay will be organised with the student.
6. Students are provided with a full orientation programme on arrival.

For further information and downloadable forms please visit

www.mbas.ac.nz
<https://mbas.ac.nz/international/enrolments>

Contact Details

Marie Wilson
International Student Director/ Dean/ Homestay Co-ordinator
Mercury Bay Area School
20 South Highway
Whitianga 3510
New Zealand

Phone: +64 7 866 5916 -Extension 844
Email: international@mbas.ac.nz

For further information about the school, please visit our website:

www.mbas.ac.nz