

# Guide To Being A Buddy



## **INTERNATIONAL BUDDY PROGRAMME**



### **THANKS FOR BEING A BUDDY.**

Here is some information about the International Buddy Programme (IBP) and it will help explain what it means to be a buddy for a new international student. At Cambridge High School we have welcomed international students from all over the world since 1989. By being a buddy you are an important part of their experience in New Zealand. Every student is unique, and each has their own needs and expectations. As a buddy, it is important to be open, flexible and helpful.

# Cambridge High School

## BUDDY BASICS



It is up to you to decide how you want to connect with your Buddy, and how much you want to share.

### TYPES OF STUDENTS

#### STUDY ABROAD AND EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Study Abroad or Exchange students study at Cambridge for up to one year. The courses they study here often credited back at their home school. These students generally are interested in immersing themselves in Kiwi culture and may enjoy travelling around New Zealand during breaks and weekends.

#### SHORT TERM STUDENTS

Short term students come for a week or more. Their aim is to experience Kiwi culture and living, use the English they have learned at school, learn more English (especially conversational), make friends, and experience life in a NZ school.

#### FULL TIME INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

These are the majority of our students. They come for all the reasons above. They often have the extra goal of attending University or Higher Education when they graduate from CHS. They can be at school for up to 5 years.

### YOUR ROLE AS A BUDDY IS TO:

- Be a friendly and welcoming face
- Commit time during the term to your buddy and to the programme
- Make first contact via email with your buddy once you are matched with a student
- Plan a meeting with your buddy once they arrive in Cambridge
- Welcome and look after your buddy when they arrive at school
- Continue to answer any questions, provide school and local information on an on-going basis
- Plan other independent activities with your buddy during the term.
- Provide feedback to the IBP Coordinator as appropriate
- Maintain contact, even if your buddy is feeling 'at home'
- Be a good representative of Cambridge High School and New Zealand,

### ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES

As a Cambridge International Buddy, you are representing the school as an ambassador and need to :

- Act in ways that are consistent with the schools core values.
- Act with integrity and demonstrate respect for others.

It is up to you to decide how you want to connect with your buddy, and how much of your personal life you want to share.

You can talk with the IBP Coordinator if you have any issues.

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## BEING A BUDDY

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### THE SCHOOL BUDDY BADGE

If you wish to receive a school 'buddy badge' (not compulsory) there is a list of tasks for you to do and record in a diary.

The criteria are on line or come to the international Office to collect a hard copy



### BUDDY PROGRAMME MEETINGS

There will be the occasional meeting with the international office to help support you.

### THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR BUDDY

We encourage you to take the initiative to plan activities with your buddy and others. Check the schools daily notices for activities at school. The town's local newspapers have "What's On" sections and the school regularly publishes "Upcoming Events", or come into the international office to help with ideas.



### COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR BUDDY

Maintain contact with your buddy and email them regularly. Just before arriving, and just after arriving, are times when your buddy may need some extra support and advice from you.

Think carefully about how you communicate and how this may come across to someone from another culture:

- Use clear language and explain New Zealand slang
- Check for understanding with your buddy. Sometimes it can be useful to follow up with an email to ensure understanding, such as: 'I can meet you on Monday 27th at 1.30 at the canteen'. See you then.'
- Be aware that building a good rapport with your buddy may take time
- You may want to research where your buddy comes from, to gain a better insight into their home culture.

Remember, people communicate in a variety of ways, not only verbally, but visually and physically as well. While it's important to be yourself and to act naturally, keep in mind that other cultures may have different ideas about appropriate dress, personal space and physical contact or behaviours such as eye contact.

### WHAT IF YOUR BUDDY IGNORES YOUR EMAILS OR APPEARS TO LOSE INTEREST?

At times a new international student will sign up to the IBP for support and find they are happy on their own after a short while in Cambridge. This may be a sign that your buddy is doing well—this is a good thing.

Even if you lose contact with your buddy you can still get to know other international students at school. Get to know the international students in your classes and around the school. You will find they are keen to make friends and share interests.

If you lose contact with your buddy and would like to be re-matched with someone else, please contact the international Buddy Coordinator, email [chsinternational@camhigh.school.nz](mailto:chsinternational@camhigh.school.nz)

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### MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH YOUR BUDDY AND EMAIL THEM REGULARLY

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## BEING THERE FOR YOUR BUDDY

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### CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is the term used to describe different feelings and reactions people can have after moving to a new country and while they are becoming familiar with a new environment.

Culture shock is common among new international students, and it is important for Buddies to understand this process so they can respond appropriately. For all new students, the first year at a new school can have its ups and downs, confusing moments and surprises. New international students must cope with the stress of entering school and living in a foreign culture.

Everything is unfamiliar—they must learn to function day-to-day in their new home.

When students first arrive, they could be feeling a wide variety of emotions—they may be excited to be in a new place, looking forward to meeting new people and trying new experiences.

Or, they may feel sad about leaving family and friends behind, nervous about living with a new family, finding their way around, buying a mobile phone, or making new friends. This is why **contacting the student before they arrive is so important—it can ease stress by solving real, and imagined problems.**

The process and timing of culture shock varies—and most experience feelings of elation, isolation, happiness and confusion at some point during their transition before they adjust to their new life.

### EUPHORIA

Your Buddy may feel excited by all of the new things encountered. The new culture can seem wonderful and new—new life-style, foods, freedoms, etc.

#### Encourage your Buddy to:

- Get involved, meet people—make contacts/friends.
- Participate in tutorials at school, prepare well and offer their ideas in class
- Practise English
- Connect with hobbies and interests from home in New Zealand.

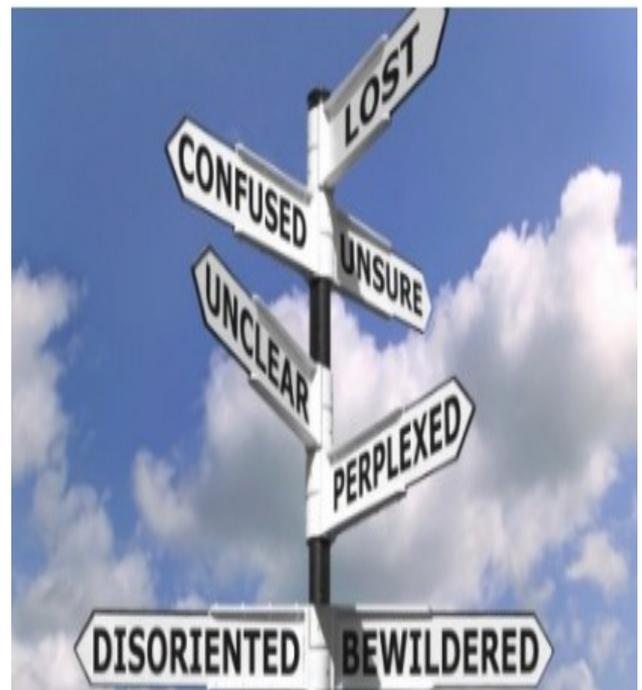
#### Help your Buddy by:

- Showing them around the school and Cambridge
- Learning their preferences; finding common interests
- Being interested in them and their culture. Learn about festivals and plan ways to celebrate respectfully with them around their special days. Make an effort with new words, names, foods, etc.

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When students first arrive, they could be feeling a wide variety of emotions - they may be excited to be in a new place, looking forward to meeting new people and trying new experiences, or they may be feeling lost and homesick.

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## DISTRESS/SHOCK/CONFUSION

Not all differences will be exciting. Some may cause your Buddy to feel sad, insecure or confused. Some may struggle to understand the 'rules' of this new culture, and feel awkward and alien. They may feel they have to change to become a new person, and fear losing their own identity. Seemingly small problems can be overwhelming, and your Buddy may show a lack of interest and have trouble sleeping, etc.

### Encourage your Buddy to:

- Focus on why they came to Cambridge in the first place
- Keep balance between old and new, home and New Zealand
- Lean on those around them who can help
- Keep a balanced lifestyle, exercise, sleep, eat well
- Maintain a positive attitude: Focus on what they have
- Be patient and tolerant of host culture
- Grieve for their losses, and balance this with new experiences
- Reach out to friends for support, both from home and New Zealand

### Help your Buddy by:

- Empathising with their difficulties—don't take criticism personally and try not to argue how wonderful New Zealand is
- Explaining the rules and norms of New Zealand—if they understand the 'why' behind frustrating situations, they may be able to better interpret situations and actions
- Keeping in contact if they are becoming withdrawn
- Encouraging them to keep submitting work and participating in class.

If you are worried about your Buddy, the CHS International Office for advice.

Email [chsinternational@camhigh.school.nz](mailto:chsinternational@camhigh.school.nz)

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**As your Buddy settles in, they will gradually  
need your support less and less**  
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## ADAPTATION/ADJUSTMENT

Hopefully, your Buddy will be successful with the cultural transition and adjust to their new life. Things become more 'normal' and automatic—they establish goals, develop routines and become concerned with basic living again. By beginning to experience a feeling of belonging and a greater sense of identity, they can be themselves in their new culture

### Encourage your Buddy to:

- Keep building connections with locals, as well as maintaining some 'old' connections and interests
- Ask locals about cultural 'rules'.

As your Buddy settles in, they will gradually need your support less and less. If you have established a good connection, you will be able to sit back and enjoy the friendship and all the things you are both learning.



## WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

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As a Buddy, you can't be expected to have all of the answers, but you can point your Buddy in the right direction by helping them find the right person or service.

### STUDENT SERVICES

CHS has many student services—the International Office is the first point of call. We can help with medical, dental, guidance, computer passwords....

Encourage your student to come and see us for all issues no matter how small.

### STUDENT LEARNING

The following programmes might be useful to your Buddy:

Peer tutoring

Lunch time tutorials

The After school homework Center

## LANGUAGE BUDDY

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The buddy programme is great for international students for:

- Help in learning another language or improving their English
- Getting feedback on pronunciation
- Getting an insight into another culture
- Learning colloquial phrases
- Making new friends

Be sharing, caring and have fun.....

... and always remember we are here to help. If you want ideas and advice or have any queries or concerns, contact the International Office at Cambridge High School

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