



# Pre-arrival Information

## Message from the Director

Dear Students,

All of us at the Victoria International Education Program would like to extend a warm welcome to you. We are very pleased that you chose to come and study with us. In order to help you get ready to study in Victoria, we have prepared the following information for you.

We hope your experience in Victoria will be a positive and rewarding one.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Jeff Davis

Director

Victoria International Education  
Greater Victoria School District #61

## Important Dates

### Mid-July

Homestay Information goes out

### End of July

- Virtual Welcome for New Students
- Trips and Excursions calendar will be sent out

### August 25

Earliest arrival date for new students

### August 28 & 29

New Student Orientation

### September 2

First day of school



## VIE Emergency Phone Number

**+1 778-676-3781**

Please carry this number with you when you travel and contact us if you need help.

## What Should I Bring to Canada?

### Important Documents

- Passport (and a copy of the passport)
- Visa or Entry Permit
- Letter of Acceptance
- Study Permit Acceptance Letter (if applicable) \*
- Custodian Documents
- Homestay or Accommodation Information
- Victoria International Education Emergency Line Number:
- **Phone SIM Cards/eSIMs**  
778-676-3781

### Clothing

Students are not required to wear uniforms. Weather in Victoria is generally mild, but it is usually cool with rain in the winter months. It is a good idea to bring a mix of casual clothes for school and suitable clothing to participate in physical education activities; like running shoes, shorts or sweat pants.

### SIM Cards

SIM cards are readily available. One option for SIM cards/eSIMs can be found online at [www.gophonebox.com](http://www.gophonebox.com). Representatives from Phone Box will also be at orientation if students wish to ask questions or purchase SIM cards/eSIMs.

### Special Medications

If you require special medications, bring them with you, along with a copy of the doctor's prescription. Please be sure to:

Bring enough medication to last you during your stay in Canada, OR

Make plans on how you will obtain medication in Canada

Please ensure that all important medical information has been shared with the program.

### Electronics

Canada's electrical supply and electrical outlets are 120 Volts and 60 Hertz (sockets, wall plugs.) Plug converters can be purchased at the airport or at various stores.

Cell phones may not be used in many school classrooms. If you will need translation support, please bring an electric language translator separate from your cell phone.

A laptop will be useful to complete school work.

### Money

Credit cards are accepted in most places. It is a good idea to always carry a small amount of cash with you for the trip. Please do not carry around large amounts of cash.



## Medical Information

Victoria International Education will arrange medical insurance coverage for you. Depending on the length of your program, you will either be given temporary medical insurance followed by BC medical insurance or just temporary medical insurance.

### Students Staying for Less Than 6 Months

Students enrolled for less than 6 months will be covered by Guard.me medical insurance. They will need to pay up front for services (doctor, bloodwork, etc.) Students will need to log on to [www.guard.me](http://www.guard.me) to complete the steps for reimbursement.



### Students Staying for Longer Than 6 Months

Longer term students will be covered by Guard.me until their MSP coverage starts in the third month after arrival. Once students have MSP coverage, they can access doctor's offices, clinics and labs free of charge. Long-term students on MSP will continue to have extended health type benefits through Guard.me. For more information on coverage, please email: [jbettauer@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:jbettauer@sd61.bc.ca)

## Bus Information

Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from school and activities. Payment for bus transportation is by cash (no change given on the bus) or by purchasing a pass through "UMO." More information is available at: <https://www.bctransit.com/umo/>

Students typically use the following two apps for bus route information:

 Google Maps  Transit App

## Orientation Information

All new students should arrive in Victoria in time to attend new student orientation at Uplands Campus.

During the orientation you will have the opportunity to meet other International Students as well as the staff members that will be supporting you. You will learn useful information for your everyday life in Canada as well as detailed information on school classes and extracurricular activities. You will also get a tour of your new school.

## Living in Homestay

Please communicate with your host family before travelling. Get to know each other.

You may find your living environment and the food very different than you are used to. Please keep an open mind and ask questions if you are not sure about something.

Spend time with your host family, especially at the beginning of your stay.

Please make an effort to keep your bedroom tidy and clean up after yourself.

**Please be sure to ask your Homestay Coordinator for help, if needed.**

You can find more detailed information online at the following link:

**[VIE Student Handbook](#)**

## Arrivals

Please book your flights through to the Victoria International Airport (YYJ) and forward the flight itinerary to the following email:

[isp\\_arrivals@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:isp_arrivals@sd61.bc.ca).

Host Families will pick students up from the airport (YYJ). Please let host families know if there are any changes to your flight plans.

## Arrivals with Natural Parents

Host families will pick students up from the airport, ferry terminal or the hotel where their parents are staying. All visits to host family homes must be coordinated through the Homestay Department. Visits may be scheduled a few days after the student has settled into their new living environment.

Please know that we are here to support you and will do everything we can to ensure your safety and well-being. If you are having any difficulties, please reach out to your host family or any member of the Victoria International Education team.

Wishing you safe and happy travels!

Your VIE Team

