

My name is Hans, and I am from Tokyo, Japan.

I am studying at Centenary Heights State High School for a one-year study abroad program.

I believe that talking to people is the best way to improve English. At the beginning of the year, I couldn't join many conversations, but now I can speak much more fluently and enjoy chatting with others. I first tried to make friends in my classes. We spent morning tea and lunch together, and through them, I made even more friends. I feel that I've built many meaningful connections and wonderful friendships here.



During my time here, I learned two very important things: to be independent and to ask for help. I am here without my family, and I think it is important to develop independence, but I also realised that there are times when we need to rely on others. Learning when and how to ask for help has improved my English communication and helped me solve problems more effectively.

When I struggled in lessons, I asked my friends or the person sitting next to me for help. If I still didn't understand, I went to the teacher and asked for an explanation. For example, in English class, I once couldn't understand language features, but a friend gave me an easy example and explained it to me. That helped me understand clearly. For my first exam, teachers supported me by modifying the assignment and explaining how to complete it. The International Students Program at the school also provided great tutoring sessions, providing support to my academy.

Outside the classroom, I joined many school activities. One of the most memorable was the Bachar Houli Cup, an AFL competition for students from all backgrounds, including beginners like me. I had never played AFL before, but my friend Jax, who is very good at it, helped me a lot. It became one of my best memories. The International Student Program also organised a wide range of activities to enrich our Australian cultural awareness, such as excursions to Sea World, Emu Gully Camp, Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary, and the Australian Outback Spectacular. They were all amazing experiences. We went there with our mentors and friends and had a wonderful time together. Another memorable trip was the History excursion in Term 2, where we visited two museums in Brisbane and learned about the impact and fear of war.

My future plan is to work in the hospitality industry, possibly at an airport or hotel. I really enjoy connecting with people from different backgrounds and experiences, and studying in Australia has strengthened that passion.

Living in Toowoomba has been such a special experience. Compared to Tokyo, it feels calm and peaceful. I love the beautiful nature and flowers here. In Agriculture class, I had the chance to feed and clean cows, sheep, and chickens, and collect eggs. Sheep shearing was my favourite activity. I think many of my friends back in Japan wouldn't have this kind of experience. Even though Toowoomba is a small town, I've built wide and deep connections here. It's not busy, and everyone is so relaxed and kind.



I love Toowoomba, and I love my Toowoomba friends. I will miss them all.

