



ST THOMAS'S
SCHOOL

International Students Handbook

International Students Handbook

Welcome to St Thomas's

Situated in the beautiful Eastern Bays of Auckland and overlooking the sea toward Rangitoto Island, St Thomas's School has served the community of Kohimarama for over sixty years.

Catering for students from Year 1 to Year 8, we are a high performing school where students excel and experience rich, varied and meaningful learning opportunities.

During their time at St Thomas's School, our students are encouraged to value who they are, connect to those around them and successfully play their part in the world. Our school values are built on the pillars of passion, excellence, leadership, and connections – guided by an unrelenting pursuit of excellence.

St Thomas's is a place where values are lived, differences are welcomed, resilience is fostered, and global connectivity is embraced.

St Thomas' School Values

- **Respect**

St Thomas's encourages students to show a high level of consideration for how their words and actions impact others and our environment.

- **Resilience**

St Thomas's encourages students to show proven ability to bounce back and deal positively with challenges and tough times.

- **Responsibility**

St Thomas's encourages students to show consistently demonstrates reliability, makes good choices and is accountable for their own actions.

Important Contact Details

International Student Director: Helen Vercoelen

hvercoelen@stthomas.school.nz

International Support Advisor (Japanese speaking): Teri Yanagisawa

tyanagisawa@stthomas.school.nz

International Support Advisor (Chinese speaking): Cynthia Chau

cchau@stthomas.school.nz

School Website

www.stthomas.school.nz

NZQA Website

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz>

New Zealand Ministry of Education

<https://parents.education.govt.nz>

New Zealand Immigration

<http://www.immigration.govt.nz>

Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students:

St Thomas's School has agreed to observe and be bound by the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students published by the Minister of Education. Copies of the Code are available from the NZQA website at: <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/international/study-nz-quals/code-international-students/>

Pastoral Care Visits

Student Care NZ Ltd are contracted to St Thomas's School to provide home visits to all of our international students.

Entry and Enrolment Procedures

- Applicant/agent requests application forms and other relevant information can be completed from our website <https://www.stthomas.school.nz/enrolment-international/>.
- All document must be completed through the website and requested documentation uploaded when making the application.
- Failure to disclose relevant information regarding, health issues or special needs e.g. special learning, physical, medical, psychological, or behavioural needs (other than English) which may hinder learning, may result in termination of the enrolment.
- If all criteria is met then the school will issue a provisional offer of placement and an invoice which will cover fees for the full study period.
- Upon payment of the invoice the school will issue a receipt along with an offer of placement.
- Students must have travel and health insurance from their date of leaving their country until they return to their home. (See insurance guidelines).

Accommodation

- Students in year 1-6 must live with one or both of their parents.
- In order to ensure that all international students are living with and continue to live with a parent for the duration of the student's study in New Zealand, Student Care NZ Ltd will meet once a term with international parents to ensure they are still living in the country. If the school becomes aware that the parent of a Year 1-6 international student has returned home, the student will also be returned home at the parents' expense, and NZIS notified.
- Students in Year 7-8 may live with a designated caregiver. A designated caregiver means a relative or close family friend designated in writing by a parent or legal guardian of an international student under 18 years as the caregiver and accommodation provider for that student. Parents of International Students who will be living with a caregiver will be required to sign an Indemnity Document for Designated Caregiver.

St Thomas's School does not arrange accommodate for students. For information on renting or purchasing property go to www.realestate.co.nz.

If you have any problems with your tenancy agreement, go to <https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/disputes/tribunal/>

Immigration

Full details of visa and permit requirement, 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 <http://www.immigration.govt.nz>

Orientation

Children and their parent/agent will meet with the International Director and the Principal before starting their schooling. They will need to have their uniform organised, stationery, lunch, passport, visas, and a copy of their Insurance Policy. The parent who is living with the child will need to show their visa also.

Essential policies for international students are included in our [student tuition agreement](#).

For general school policies please click [here](#).

Children are assigned a classroom and the class teacher is responsible for ensuring the child's integration into the school.

The specialist ESOL teacher will immediately assess international students and, in consultation with the classroom teacher, will implement a programme to support the student's learning.

Fees

\$16,000 per year (includes GST)

\$4,000 per term (includes GST)

Short-term enrolments \$4,000 (includes GST)

Administration Fee

Annual \$700 (non-refundable) for each calendar year or part thereof.

Other Costs

- Stationery: Approximately \$100 per year depending on year level
- Trips and Excursions: Costs according to trip expenses
- Activities: As part of the curriculum, costs are sometimes incurred for materials not readily available in the school
- Performances: At times outside performers are in the school and students pay to attend the performance
- Sports Activities: Sports experts are occasionally contracted to provide a sports programme and the students pay for the programme.
- Uniform: This can be purchased online with Argyle Schoolwear. There is a link on the front page of the school's website.

Medical and Travel Insurance

International students must have appropriate and current medical and travel insurance while studying in New Zealand. Please ensure this document is translated into English for school administration.

NB. Students must provide evidence of medical and travel insurance before enrolment can be finalised.

The insurance must cover the full length of time spent in New Zealand. New Zealand insurance cover will be accepted only. The school will keep a record of the insurance policy number and the type of cover provided.

Concerns

GOT A PROBLEM? LET'S GET IT SORTED

If something is making you unhappy talk to someone to help solve the problem. You can ask a friend or another person to support you.

Problems with your schoolwork, teachers, assessments

Problems with other students

Problems with fees, refunds, insurance, enrolment

Talk to

your teacher or International Support Adviser

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your teacher or International Support Adviser

If you are still not happy talk to the International Student Director

Not happy with the outcome? Make an appointment to see the Principal and International Student Director

If you think the school has not found a satisfactory solution and is in breach of the Code contact
NZQA: 0800 697 296

Submit a complaint query on the NZQA website
<https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/the-code-for-learners/learner-complaints/>

or email risk@nzqa.govt.nz

If your complaint is about fees, contact Study Complaints
<https://www.studycomplaints.org.nz/make-complaint>



International students – How to make a complaint

What to do if you have a complaint

When you come to New Zealand as an international student, you can expect to receive a high standard of education, and to feel safe and well cared for while you live and study here.

If you have a complaint, it is important that you go through the right steps.

Here is what you need to do.

Ask your education provider to resolve your complaint

Your education provider is your first point of contact for any complaint you have, including any complaint about the agents your provider uses.

They must have a complaints process in place for you to go through, and they must tell you what that process is. Follow that process to see if your complaint can be resolved by your provider.

If your complaint is not resolved – contact NZQA

If your education provider has not resolved your complaint, and you still wish to have it resolved, then you can contact NZQA. NZQA is a government organisation. They can provide an independent assessment of your complaint and will either investigate your concerns or advise you what you can do next.

You can submit your complaint query on the NZQA website, or send an email to risk@nzqa.govt.nz

If you need more information on the complaints process, visit this [webpage](#) or contact NZQA on 0800 697296.

Or – if it is a financial dispute – you can contact iStudent Complaints

iStudent Complaints is available to help you resolve financial or contractual disputes with your education provider. There is no cost to you for this service.

iStudent Complaints is an independent service with experience in helping people to resolve disputes. You can contact iStudent Complaints via their [website](#) or on 0800 00 66 75.

New Zealand's quality standards

All international students enrolled with a New Zealand education provider are covered by the New Zealand Government's Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

This is legislation that outlines the level of care that education providers, and their agents, must provide to international students while they live and study in New Zealand.

The education system is regulated with strong quality assurance systems across the board.

In general, as an international student you can expect that:

- the quality of teaching and learning you receive will meet high educational standards
- the marketing and promotion information you receive before you enrol is clear, complete and accurate so you can make a well-informed decision about whether an education provider is the right choice for you
- education providers' agents give you reliable information and act with integrity and professionalism
- you will receive enough information and support to help you with your enrolment, including understanding the legal obligations you have, and that you will receive all the proper documentation
- you are welcomed and have enough information, guidance and support to help you settle into your new life in New Zealand
- your study environment is safe, and that you have a safe place to live

About the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021

The New Zealand Government's Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 is a document that clearly outlines the full legal requirements that education providers enrolling international students must abide by – to read this, go to the NZQA website.

About NZQA

NZQA is a government organisation which manages the quality of New Zealand qualifications, and also acts as the Administrator of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

www.nzqa.govt.nz

Out of School Care

Kelly Club run an onsite before and after school childcare. For more information go to <http://www.stthomas.school.nz/before-and-after-school-care.html>

Bell Times

8:55am – Bell – Students in classrooms
10:30am – Morning interval
10:50am – School re-commences
12:30pm – Lunch break
1:15pm – Lunch Eating
3:00pm – School closes

Children are expected to be in class, prepared for the day by 8.55am. Please ensure you have your child at school in plenty of time. The main gate to the school will be opened at 8.15am each morning. Students should not arrive before then. On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, parents drop off their children at the school gate. This helps with traffic flow outside the school and builds resilient and independent students.

On Fridays, whānau are welcomed onto the school site in the morning while our school gates are open. You can use this time to explore your child's classroom with them, look at work they have been doing or have a quick chat with their classroom teacher and other parents. We request that all parents leave the school site before the 8.55am bell goes, so that we can begin our teaching and learning programme.

School finishes at 3pm and for safety and supervision reasons children are expected to leave the school grounds promptly.

Curriculum

St Thomas's School teaches the NZ curriculum. For more information about the curriculum follow this link: <https://parents.education.govt.nz/primary-school/learning-at-school/new-zealand-curriculum/>

ESOL

St Thomas's School has an excellent ESOL programme with specialist ESOL teachers. Most International students, who need additional English language support, are provided ESOL sessions weekly, where support is provided on current classroom learning topics. Teacher aides are also available in the classroom to assist International students.

Sports and Outdoor Education

We are a top performing sports school with a number of different sports teams that represent St Thomas's School at both local and national events.

St Thomas's School runs a successful and exciting outdoor education programme that all students participate in. This enhances classroom learning by providing a great opportunity to put learned topics into practice.

Enrichment Programmes

St Thomas's School has a large number of optional enrichment programmes offered to our students.

Sports: Table Tennis, Tennis, Football, Chess, Basketball, Hockey, Netball, Swimming (we have a heated school pool)

Music: Choir, Piano, Guitar, Drums, Band

Language and Art: Speech and Drama, Art, Kapa Haka

St Thomas's School prides itself on encouraging leadership and encourage senior students to work with the junior students during lunchtimes, offering education in a variety of sporting areas.

St Thomas's School also offers School Camp to both Year 6 and Year 8 students annually. Year 7 students enjoy a Youthtown programme, learning sailing, kayaking and paddle boarding.

Lunches

Children bring morning tea and lunches to school each day.

Transport

Although there is no official school bus, NZ Bus provides a bus service to the school.

Please see [this link](#) for timetables

For more information on public transport, go to <https://at.govt.nz/>

Absence

Please advise the school on the morning of your child's absence via the Hero communications app. If we are not advised through one of the following ways, we phone the home, workplace or emergency contacts which is a time-consuming activity we prefer to avoid.

We appreciate your help in reducing the time we spend checking that our children are safe.

Communications

We use the Hero app to send out school news, general updates, reminders, events and much more. The app is available on iPhone, iPad, iPod, Android Phone, Android Tablet and Windows phone devices. If you don't have a mobile device, there is also an app available for computer, both Mac and PC.

Please download Hero to your devices, register for a free account then find and tick St Thomas's School. When you are ticking specific boxes within our school account, please make sure you tick on the specific classes that apply to your family only.

Through the app you'll receive all information, much like a text message, directly to your device, and everything we post can be translated into 90 languages. You will also be able to submit student absences and permission slips via the app.

Homework

Homework enables all children to learn the skills of independent study. It is also an appropriate time for children to learn spelling, basic facts and to read. Whilst homework is not compulsory, we strongly recommend it is done daily. The following are guidelines for the time to be spent daily on Homework:

- Years 1 - 3 Daily reading plus 10 minutes of another activity (spelling words etc)
- Years 4 - 6 20 - 30 minutes
- Years 7 - 8 30 - 45 minutes

Leaving the School Grounds

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day unless they are collected by an adult who has reported to the office and signed the appropriate register. Class teachers are advised that students are unable to leave with an adult unless the adult has been to the office and signed the child out and been given a "pass-out slip" for the teacher.

Please note that children cannot be signed out between 10.30am – 11.50am and 12.30pm and 1.30pm.

Reporting to Parents

We have an online, real-time reporting system that allows parents to review their child's progress at any time throughout the school year. In terms 1 and 3 we hold Student Led Conferences which enable students to showcase their learning and progress towards set goals with their families. This combination of reporting methods ensures that parents and caregivers receive comprehensive information about the progress of their children.

Suncare Policy

The Board of Trustees has a Suncare Policy to ensure children's safety during the spring and summer months. It is compulsory for all children to wear the St Thomas's School hat during terms 1 and 4 whenever they are outdoors. We ask for your support in ensuring your child brings an appropriate hat to school every day during these terms.

Uniform

School uniform is supplied by Argyle Schoolwear. There is a link on the front page of our website where you can purchase uniform online. For uniform information please go to <http://www.stthomas.school.nz/school-uniform.html>

BYOD Programme

ALL students in Years 5-8 will need to bring their own device to school each day. Students in Year 4 are encouraged to bring their own device, but it is not compulsory at this year level.

To assist parents with selecting a suitable device we have worked with The Warehouse Group to set up this website: [St Thomas's School BYOD Device Options](#). Please note that BYOD devices can be purchased from anywhere, this is just one option.

More About our St Thomas's BYOD Programme

Our programme is flexible. Any internet capable laptop will be a huge advantage for your child. iPads/tablets can be used, but we find these are difficult for writing and lack some of the features that make them suitable for all school related tasks.

The use of BYOD devices in class gradually increases from Year 4 to Year 8. By Year 7&8 our students are predominantly learning using devices so that they are well prepared for their college transition.

Computers

All children need to sign the internet safety agreement.

Mobile Phones

Children may not have mobile phones during the school day. If a student brings a mobile phone, they need to have it switched off and in their school bag. The school takes no responsibility for mobile phones as they are not part of the learning programme.

International Parents

The parent must agree to take full responsibility for the pastoral care of the student outside of school hours. If it is known that a parent has left a child unsupervised at any time, then Immigration NZ will be informed, and the student could lose his/her place at St Thomas's School.

New Zealand Culture

For information about life in New Zealand visit NauMai NZ <https://naumainz.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz/>

Renting a Property in New Zealand

For information about renting a property in New Zealand and tenancy agreements go to <https://www.tenancy.govt.nz>

To search for available rental properties, go to <https://www.realestate.co.nz/> or <https://www.trademe.co.nz/property>

Local Libraries

For information on local libraries, go to <https://www.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz/>

Emergency Services

Police	111
Ambulance	111
Fire	111

For information on Earthquakes and Tsunamis got to <https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/>