



**NELSON COLLEGE
FOR GIRLS**

Te Kura Tamavāhine o Whakatū

INTERNATIONAL

Welcome to New Zealand and Nelson College for Girls

Homestay Student Guidelines



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YOUR HOMESTAY

Overseas students must live in the Nelson College for Girls Boarding House or in a Nelson College for Girls Homestay. We will not allow you to live in a flat.

Your homestay will be happy if you keep to these rules:

1. **Be part of your host family.** Be friendly and join in family activities. Respect the family and they will treat you the same way as you treat them.
2. **Respect the home** – it is not a hotel. Always ask before you borrow or use anything that is not yours.
3. People in New Zealand do not have servants and they have busy lives. Children often have family jobs to help around the home – such as washing the dishes, setting the table, taking the dog for a walk. **You can help too.**
4. Always **tell your family where you are going** and what time you will be home. Your family will worry about you, just as they worry about their own children. It is polite to ask permission to go out.
5. **Tell your family if you will not be home for dinner** or for lunch. It is polite to give at least three hours' notice.
6. **Ask for permission** to invite friends to your house. Families will welcome your friends if you do this.
7. Always **finish your homework.** Homework is important and all students must do homework.
8. The more you **talk in English**, the better your English will be. Talk with your family. You and your family can learn from each other.
9. If there are any big problems with your homestay, **talk to the Homestay Co-ordinator**, or anyone in the International Office at school.

MEALTIMES AND EATING

A New Zealand family usually eats their meals together.

It is good to always eat dinner with your family. Do not hide in your room during dinner times. It is polite to say that the meal is good. Try to also have breakfast with your family.

You do not have to eat any foods that you do not like. You can say, **“No, thank you”**, however, always try new foods – it is not polite to refuse something you have not tried, and you might find that you like it.

At the table, we pass food bowls to each other. New Zealanders do not take everything from a plate when there are other people who are waiting to have some too. Ask someone to pass the salt or sauce or salad; do not just stretch across the table.

Wait until everybody is ready to eat. If your host parents say, “You can start”, then it is all right to eat, but usually we wait and all start to eat at the same time.

You may have to prepare your own school lunch. This is usual in New Zealand.

In New Zealand we eat quietly. It is not polite to eat noisily. We do not lift our plates close to our mouths – we lift the food on forks or spoons.

We stay at the table until everyone has finished eating.

Many New Zealand families talk at the table. They talk about what they did during the day or interesting things they have seen. They will talk to you, too. Talk back to them. They are interested in you and want to know what you have coming up at school.

Host families will appreciate your help. You can:

- Put dishes and cutlery on the table
- Help to serve the meal
- Take dishes back to the kitchen
- Help to wash or dry the dishes

Most students have something to eat when they get home after school. They eat quick foods such as fresh fruit, vegetables, instant noodles and toast for example. Ask your family what you can eat after school. Your family will expect you to eat a full dinner with them.

Your family will be pleased if you cook a meal from your own country sometime while you are staying with them.

Lunches: Most New Zealand students take lunches to school. The lunches come from home. Many New Zealand students eat bread sandwiches, fruit, vegetables or yoghurt. Tell your family what you like and what you don't like. You can buy food at school, but you should bring lunch from home most days. Three meals a day is included as part of your homestay.



HOMESICKNESS AND TIREDNESS

- It is normal to feel tired when you first get to New Zealand. The customs, climate and food are different, and listening and speaking in a new language will make you feel tired initially. Do not worry about this. It will get better.
- Try not to have long afternoon sleeps, as it is better for you to have a good sleep at night.
- Homesickness is natural. You may miss your home, family, friends, and everything you know. This time of adjustment is different for everyone.
- If you feel very homesick, let your host family know.
- You can also talk to people in the International Office. They all understand and will help you.

YOUR BEDROOM

Sometimes you will need a quiet time in your room. However, do not spend all your time in your bedroom. Try to talk to your family about different things.

There are no locks on bedroom doors in New Zealand. We often change our clothes without closing the door. You may close the door whenever you like. Your room is your space.

The bed may be different from your country. We sleep between the sheets which are normally washed each week. Ask your family to show you how to make your bed. You need to make your own bed every day.

Keep your room tidy. Turn off the heater when you go to bed, and when you leave for school. Leaving heaters on for long periods has the potential to cause a fire and they use a lot of electricity, which is expensive. If you are cold at night, ask your host family for more blankets.

New Zealand families like to let sunlight and fresh air into bedrooms. We pull back the curtains and open the windows when at home.

It is usually best to do homework at the desk in your bedroom.

Smoking is not allowed.

Bedtime:

Most New Zealand families go to bed about 10.00pm.

It is our custom to say "Good night" to each other before we go to bed. It is important that you do this, too.

Turn off your electric blanket before you go to sleep. It can be dangerous to sleep with an electric blanket working as it can cause a fire.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

- You must leave a contact number and tell your homestay parents where you are going and who you will be with.
- It is not advisable for students to be out alone.
- It is your homestay's decision as to whether social parties are acceptable, and we ask that you check the arrangements of the party before you get permission from your homestay.
- Come home at the agreed time you have made with your homestay parents.
- If you are going to be late, please contact them to let them know.



Overnight stays

This is only approved by prior arrangement and there must be discussion with the homestay parents first.

Holiday travel and homestay arrangements for while you are in NZ must be approved by the International Office before being arranged. Travelling outside Nelson needs parent approval.

USING THE SHOWER AND BATHROOM

In most New Zealand homes, the bathroom is very busy in the morning. Try to be as quick as you can.

Bathing/Showering:

- Ask your family what time is best for you to shower or bath.
- Showering once a day is usually enough. Water is a limited resource.
- You need to supply your own personal toiletries (shampoo, toothpaste and personal items)
- If there is a shower curtain, pull it across to keep the floor dry.
- Put a bathmat on the floor to stand on when you are wet.
- Hot water is expensive in New Zealand. Try to not take too long in the shower. Around 5-10 minutes is a usual amount of time.
- Ask your family where to put your wet towels.

Toilet:

Ask your host mother about the disposal of your menstrual pads or tampons. Do not put pads down the toilet. Your host mother will talk about this with you. Listen carefully and ask questions if you need to.

WASHING CLOTHES

- Speak to your host parent about washing clothes. Some may wish to do the washing for you and combine with the normal washing load. Some families may want you to wash your own clothes.
- Ask them where to put your dirty washing, and when to change the sheets on your bed.
- You may have some favourite clothes that you wish to hand wash. Ask your host parent where to do this and where to dry them.

Remember: You must not hang wet clothing and underwear in your wardrobe or bedrooms. Dripping water damages carpet and furniture. This upsets your host family.

In New Zealand we dry our underwear outside on the clothesline. Please do not be embarrassed to share this custom with us. Do not place wet clothes on heaters or close to heaters to dry.

AROUND THE HOME



You are part of a New Zealand family. It is good to offer to do some small household jobs, for example, helping with dishes, making your host mother/father a cup of coffee, or offering to tidy a room.

Spend time with your host family every day to practice your English. It is polite to ask your host family about their day as well.

You may want to keep up with the local news on-line to find out about what is happening around you and gives a topic of conversation.

KEEPING WARM

- New Zealand houses can be colder than those in your country.
- Most New Zealand people prefer to wear a warm sweater rather than turn on a heater.
- When you are cold try to do it the New Zealand way first – put on a warm jersey, warm trousers and socks.
- **New Zealand weather is very changeable. It is important to take a warm sweater/jacket every day.**
- **It is important to keep warm. If you are not warm at night, ask for another blanket.**

Electric Blankets:

Some families use an electric blanket to warm the bed. We turn them on about an hour before we go to bed. **Do not sleep with the blanket turned on. This is not safe.** Make sure the electric blanket is turned off during the day.

SMOKING AND DRINKING

Most New Zealanders think cigarette smoke is very bad for your health. They do not like the smell of cigarettes inside. It is best not to smoke when you are in New Zealand. In New Zealand you are not able to legally drink alcohol until you are 18 years old.

INSURANCES

All international students have medical and travel insurance. This is a compulsory part of enrolling at Nelson College for Girls.

FAMILY LIFE

From time-to-time families may have disagreements. This can be embarrassing but it is normal. Good communication is the key to getting along. The host family want to make you feel part of their family, so the best way to do this is to talk to them.

Try asking questions of your host family and share your experiences.

Using **“Please”** when **asking** for something and **“Thank you”** when **receiving** is the expected polite way to communicate.

Standards of Behaviour:

Any students involved in serious misconduct such as drug taking will be asked to leave the College and sent back to their home country.

Nelson College for Girls expects you to be polite, honest and fair to others.

If you have any concerns or think that a person is being unkind to you, always tell the International Dean or Homestay Coordinator.

Worries are usually easy to solve, if we know about them.



CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

New Zealand families may kiss and hug freely. They often show affection in public and around the home. If they touch your arms or face, they are showing they care about you. If you feel uncomfortable with this, please let them know in a kind way.

Eye Contact:

New Zealanders like to look at people when they talk. We see this as honest. Many New Zealand people are less modest than some other countries. Family members may walk around the house in their swimsuit or similar clothing. They may not always close the bedroom door while they change their clothes.

In New Zealand, we do many helpful things for each other. We hold doors open for people coming behind us, and men often let women go through a door first. We see this as being polite. We try to think of other people as well as of ourselves.

New Zealand women and men have more equality than in many countries. It is important to show respect to New Zealand women.

FRIENDSHIPS



Students are best to try and not form a romantic relationship while at College. Try to have friendships with many students.

Making friends can be hard but even a smile can open-up a conversation. When you go to class, sit with another student. Try to make an effort to talk, even if it is a simple conversation about the subjects you are studying.

If you do not understand something in the school, ask your teacher or someone else. The teachers are very approachable and expect you to ask when you don't understand.

Joining in activities, like music or sports are good ways to make new friends.

TELEPHONE CALLS AND INTERNET USE

Telephone:

- All Nelson phone calls on a landline are free, however many homes do not have these anymore and instead rely on having their own mobile phones.
- Homestay students are encouraged to have a mobile phone to keep in contact with your host family about your movements. Mobile phones are not to be used during class time at school.
- Don't make calls very late at night as your talking may keep others awake.

Internet:

- Host families will provide you with Internet for homework, email and for keeping in contact with your families.
- Some families have a limit on their Wifi usage (unlike many other parts of the world where Wifi capacity is unlimited). They will let you know how to connect with their internet provider and set any boundaries on time of use.
- Please be aware that all family members have to share the internet, so you may need to ask if you can stream movies / game on-line.

EMERGENCIES

In New Zealand we telephone **111** for emergencies (police, fire, ambulance).

We call an ambulance for an accident or dangerous health problems such as a heart attack. This is a free call from a public phone or your mobile.

In an Emergency:

- Dial 111
- Tell the operator what service you require (police or fire or ambulance)
- The operator will ask you for your name, your address and the phone number.
- Tell them briefly what is wrong.
- Listen carefully to what they want you to do.

BANKS

- Money machines are available 24 hours a day.
- Nelson College for Girls can help you open a bank account with ASB.
- It is not wise to leave large sums of cash lying around. Generally, you can use an EFTPOS / credit card for most transactions.

POSTING LETTERS

When wanting to post something, you will need to take the letter or parcel to a NZ Post Shop – e.g. Paper Plus (on Trafalgar Street) or a courier.

HOME ADDRESS

It is important that the school has up-to-date and accurate information on the address of your parents. This includes mobile number and email address.

Please advise any change of address to the International Office.

TRANSPORT

- You will walk, ride, take a bus or be driven to and from school. Discuss this with your host family.
- We recommend that you take a taxi home after dark or arrange for a ride.
- It is advisable that you do not walk around at night by yourself.
- In New Zealand you must wear a cycle helmet when you ride a bicycle. It is the law of our country. Don't ride on the footpath.
- Always keep your bicycle secure with a chain and padlock.

CARS

Driving a car whilst being an international Student at Nelson College for Girls is not allowed, as the risks are too high. Therefore, you must not own a car.

You must only travel in a car in New Zealand if the driver has a current full license. The driver must be over 21 years old.

Do not hitch-hike in New Zealand. This can be dangerous.

FAMILY OUTINGS

It is fun to join with your family on outings and visits. This is a chance to see the country, make new friends and practice your English.

If your family goes somewhere that involves expenses, for example, a movie or out to dinner, offer to pay your share. They may not accept, but will feel pleased that you offered. This may be different from your own country where a host may pay for everything.



New Zealanders are proud of their country. It is beautiful and mostly very clean. They will expect you to appreciate it.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

It is easy to join in. Discuss possible activities with your International Co-ordinator. Playing sports, or joining groups like the choir or orchestra, is a good way to make new friends, and to enjoy school life.

HOLIDAYS

During the holidays we encourage you to go away and see something of New Zealand. The best way to do this is with a student tour company and these are available around the North and South Islands. We need to get your parents and agent's permission before you can go away. We need dates, travel plans, who you will be travelling with. Not all companies are suitable for our students – please check to see which ones are.

***** Please talk to us before you book anything *****

If you are away for 3 nights or more, your homestay family will reimburse you 50% of your homestay fees. They know this, but if you have difficulty in asking please see us.



DEALING WITH CONCERNS

If you need information, for example on how to join a sports team; or, if you have a problem, like not knowing where to go to class, you must ask. Possible people to talk to are:

- Your Host Family
- International Staff
- Your Year Group Dean or Arahi Teacher
- A Guidance Counsellor
- Your Native Speaker Support Person / your Agent

EXPENSES, VALUABLES AND MONEY

It is necessary to pay tuition and accommodation fees in order to obtain a student visa. These are paid to the school a year in advance. Homestay families are paid by the Finance Officer two weeks in advance.

If you want to store your luggage over the summer holidays, there is a charge of \$100.

Any refund of fees will be according to the Board of Trustees refund policy. The International Office can give you a copy of this policy.

You must be financially independent. You pay for travel, medical expenses, uniform, stationery, school expenses (other than fees) and any personal spending.

- Be careful with money. Carry only what you think you will need.
- Do not lend money to other people and do not borrow from other people except in emergencies.
- Look after your valuables (e.g. cameras, cell phones) carefully. Not everyone is honest. Put your passport in a secure place.
- Your host family may ask you about your money. This is because they want it to be safe and they are concerned for you. We do not consider this rudeness.
- Learn to budget your money and make money last.

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS:

Nelson College for Girls	03 548 3104
Neisha Kindley International Co-ordinator	neishakindley@ncg.school.nz 027 5588 208
Sarah Turner International Director	sarah.turner@ncg.school.nz 021 264 6691
Jo Beggs International Dean	jo.beggs@ncg.school.nz 0274 755 422
School EMERGENCY Number (24HR)	03 545 9601

Things to Do & See in Nelson

(See how many you can tick off the list)



Founders Heritage Park
Nelson Provincial Museum
Pics Peanut Butter World
Nelson Saturday Market
Miyazu Japanese Garden
Tahunanui Beach
Bumper Boats
Brook Waimarama Sanctuary
Ten Pin Bowling
Toad Hall Café
Centre of New Zealand
Queens Gardens
Suter Gallery Nelson
Theatre Royal Shows
Aquatic Swimming
Roller Skating

Isel House and Gardens
Broadgreen Historic House
Classic Cars Museum
Richmond Mall
Natureland Zoo
Mini Golf
Mega Slide
Flip out Trampoline
Visit Mapua
Bike Tours
Christ Church Cathedral
Historical and Heritage Tours
Railway Reserve – cycle or walk
Stand Up Paddle boarding
State Movie Theatre or Silky Otter

It's Nelson, is a great website for dates and times of current events in Nelson

www.itson.co.nz

Search online for more details of places and things to do

[Nelson Tasman Official Tourism & Travel Guide | Nelson, NZ](#)

[Nelson Tasman - Things to see and do | South Island | New Zealand \(newzealand.com\)](#)