



Columba College



Agent Handbook

Introduction:

This handbook is to help agents understand the ethos of Columba College and to provide support to parents and students in order to make well informed decisions. It is important to be clear about procedures and to be compliant and well informed about the practices of the International Department.

Welcome:

Welcome to Columba College, where our aim is to instil in every student a love of learning and an understanding that education matters. For over a century, we have been preparing students to contribute and succeed, wherever their path may take them. Columba is unique. A state-integrated, special character school, it is co-educational from years 0-6, and then offers single sex girls' education and boarding from years 7-13. Founded as a Presbyterian school in 1915, the Presbyterian faith has long been associated with education, and service within the community. In an inclusive environment, students are taught to respond generously and compassionately, and to look after one another and those within their community. At Columba we have a clear academic focus and encourage excellence in sport and cultural pursuits, while being mindful of each student's wellbeing. We teach our students to think creatively and critically in all aspects of their lives and to know that each and every one of them can make a difference.

Our History:

Columba was founded in 1915, the amalgamation of two earlier girls' schools, Girton College and Braemar

House School. The Rev Alexander White, a firm believer in church schools and higher education, was the driving force in its establishment. Since that time, the College's motto has been *Gratia et Disciplina*. This motto also forms the start of the College's mission statement: With grace and good discipline, we are dedicated to all Columba College students being lifelong learners committed to personal excellence, ethical behaviour and service to others. We want them to participate and contribute as informed, responsible and compassionate citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand and the global community.

The motto is also integral to Columba's values, which are encapsulated in the word Grace:

- Good Discipline
- Respect
- Aroha
- Citizenship
- Excellence

Our Presbyterian heritage lives on, not only in the concept of service but also in the weekly chapel celebrations led by our chaplain, Chapel Perfects and Chapel Committee and in the Religious Studies programme which is part of our curriculum.



Our Future:

The College has an exciting vision for the future which is set out in the strategic plan under six pillars:

1. LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

Columba College will provide a comprehensive, challenging curriculum where each student is encouraged and supported to reach his or her potential.

2. TEACHING AND PERSONNEL

Columba College is focused on attracting high- quality, motivated teaching and support staff.

3. WELLBEING AND PASTORAL

Columba College resources appropriate, responsive approaches to student and staff well-being in order to nurture confident, articulate, resilient young people who feel supported and empowered to succeed at school and beyond, and ensure staff feel valued and supported as part of the Columba community.

4. EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP

Governors and trustees, including school staff and students, work strategically and collaboratively to be accountable for the financial security of Columba College and its special character. Through astute governance, we will optimise physical and intellectual resources to improve student learning in the future.

5. COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS

Columba College encourages strong connections within the school, local, national and global community to provide opportunities, explore possibilities and create a sense of belonging for all members.

6. LEARNING AND LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Columba College is committed to being a special character, boarding and day school where investment is placed on students living and learning in an environment which promotes excellence in all endeavours.



International:

We live in a global village. Today our graduates are employed across the world. That is why Columba College values and embraces our small but vibrant international community and the cultural diversity they bring to our school life.

Columba College offers a fully integrated academic programme for students from overseas. Our results are among the top in Otago and New Zealand. Each student's individual programme is assessed and mentored from the outset and each student is given the language support needed to achieve academic and pastoral goals.

The Dean of International Students works closely with families, students and agents to ensure that the well-being of each student is carefully monitored. In these interesting international times, it is important that students feel good and function well. To help with this, International students have their own designated space for ESOL tutoring, lectures, supervised study as well as socialisation and administration.

Location:

Columba College is located in the city of Dunedin on the South Island of New Zealand. Dunedin is the home of New Zealand's oldest university, the University of Otago, and students are able to enjoy the benefits of being educated in a vibrant university city. Dunedin is an attractive city with a population of 126,000. It is not too big and not too small, yet has all the amenities and infrastructure students could hope for. With everything close to hand, it's easy to get around. Dunedin has earned the reputation as New Zealand's wildlife capital, the Otago Peninsula home to New Zealand fur seals & sea lions, yellow-eyed penguins, and the world's only mainland royal albatross colony.



International Staff:

The quality of pastoral care is a strength of the International Department. In addition to the normal issues of being a young woman, International students have the added pressures of living in a different culture, missing friends and family, and excelling academically in a foreign language.



MRS. SUSAN MEDARY- International Director and Homestay Manager Dip Teaching Cert, TESOL, LTCL Performance smedary@columbacollege.school.nz



DR. SALLY HENDERSON- ESOL Tutor PhD (Linguistics), MATESL (Illinois), RSA CELTA (Cambridge), BA (Hons)



MS. LAUREN STIRLING- ESOL Tutor Grad. Dip. Of Teaching and Learning, Dip. for Graduates endorsed in English, Cert. of Advanced Chinese, MA (Applied Linguistics), BA (Linguistics) Cert. TEFL

Programme:

Columba College offers a fully integrated, mainstream academic programme for girls from overseas, years 7 through 13. Our academic results are the top in Otago and among the highest in New Zealand.

Each girl's individual programme is assessed and mentored from the outset. Each is given the ESOL support needed for her to achieve alongside Kiwi girls whose native language is English. Students are supported to sit external language examinations, including IELTS.

International girls can strive to gain NCEA and University Entrance in New Zealand. Alternatively, many girls have achieved the necessary qualifications to gain admission to their university of first choice back home or in the United Kingdom and North America.

CURRICULUM

- Students can choose from a wide variety of subjects.
- International students go to classes with the New Zealand students and are taught by their subject teachers. Qualified language teaching specialists from the International Department support the girls in many of these classes.
- From Year 11, all International students work towards NCEA (National Certificate of Educational Achievement), which is a qualification that is recognised by employers and tertiary institutions, such as universities, in New Zealand and overseas.
- At NCEA level student's complete internal assessment exams as well as external and national examinations.

Link to NZQA website: www.nzqa.govt.nz

In order to achieve success at the school at Year 9 and 10, or at NCEA Years 11,12 and 13, we highly recommend that girls attend Columba College for the full academic year, February until December. If a student arrives mid year or Term 3 or 4, Columba and the International Department work to support academic success, through a tailored programme of learning.

OPTION PATHWAYS

Year 11 5 periods per week of each	Year 12 5 periods per week of each	Year 13 5 periods per week of each
Choose SIX of:		Choose FIVE (or 6) of:
Compulsory:		
English	English	
Mathematics and Statistics		
Science		
	Accounting	Accounting
	Agribusiness *	Agribusiness*
	Agriculture **	Agriculture **
Art		
	Biology	Biology
		Calculus
	Chemistry	Chemistry
Chinese (Mandarin)	Chinese (Mandarin)	Chinese (Mandarin)
	Classical Studies	Classical Studies
	Data and Modelling	Design
Digital Technology	Design	Digital Technology
	Digital Technology	
Economics	Drama **	Economics
	Economics	English
French		French
Geography	French	Geography
German	Geography	German
History	German	History
	History	Mathematics and Statistics
Music	Mathematics and Statistics	Music
	Music	Physics
	Physics	Photography
Physical Education	Photography	Physical Education
	Physical Education	Statistics
	Spanish**	
* Combined Columba College and John McGlashan College subject ** Offered at John McGlashan College \$30 for terms 1, 2 and 3 per subject will be charged to the account of student's attending John McGlashan College courses. This is to partially meet transportation costs.		
UNITS (compulsory) 1 – 2 periods per week, cycle by term		
Careers	Careers	Careers
Health	Life Skills	Life Skills
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Religious Studies	Religious Studies	Religious Studies

SPORTS AND CO-CURRICULAR

International girls are required to play at least one team sport. Badminton and basketball are the most popular choices, along with attending the annual International Ski Weekend in Queenstown.

Additionally, after school activities can include yoga, boxing or aerobics. Girls can play or arrange tuition to play a musical instrument or sing in the madrigal choir; they can also participate in theatricals, the school fair, and in fun activities such as bowling, ice-skating and picnics. Finally, there are formals and class dances at elegant locations to look forward to.

Participation in sports clubs, co-curricular activities and community service are noted and included in curriculum vitae prepared for attachment to university applications.



PERFORMING ARTS

All students are encouraged to be involved in the arts and cultural activities, to develop their creativity and to enhance their learning and social development through participation.

Students have many opportunities to perform and compete at school, and also regionally and nationally.

A wide selection of cultural clubs and activities are also on offer to enable all students to discover strengths and interests and to experience enjoyment through the arts. Through participation in school clubs and activities students enhance not only their own experiences and social development, but contribute to and enhance school life as well.



Discipline:

It is important for the following school rules to be discussed with the student before arriving at the college.

The following list is a summary of some of the important school rules:

- Students must wear the correct uniform at all times
- Students are not allowed to wear make-up, jewellery or nail polish
- Students must have their hair worn above the collar or tied back when in uniform
- Students must arrive at school on time and attend all classes on time
- Absence from school is not allowed without a good reason e.g. illness
- Appointments in school time should only be made for urgent reasons e.g., a doctor's appointment
- Students must complete all homework tasks assigned to them by their teachers each night
- Cell phones cannot be used in class and will be taken away from students if used inappropriately. Students cannot receive calls unless in case of emergency
- Students may not take photographs of staff or students without permission
- No chewing gum is to be brought to school and no food or drink is to be consumed in class
- Students must go to all chapel services and assemblies (held weekly) as well as go to the special church services held throughout the year
- Students must use good manners at all times and show respect for the teachers, school staff, and other students
- Students must follow the school/NCEA rules for sitting exams. These include no talking, no passing notes, no taking in of notes or study materials, and no leaving early

The following are strictly prohibited at the school:

- Negative behaviour, such as swearing, bullying, theft or harassment
- Smoking, drugs and alcohol

Students who are experiencing problems can obtain help and support from senior students, teachers, the Guidance Counsellor, the Deans and the Principal. In the International Department students can also get help from the Director and teaching staff.



Boarding or Homestay:

- Boarding on campus at Columba is an opportunity to become independent in a safe and supportive environment with close access to the campus and its amenities.
- Alternatively Home Stays, which are carefully selected, and police vetted, offer first-hand experience and understanding of another culture as well as daily practise of conversational English in a family setting.
- A third option is for parents to choose a relative or close friend living in Dunedin as their daughter's accommodation provider. This is a Private arrangement, which would still be monitored by the school.

International students must follow these rules when at homestay or boarding:

- No driving (unless student has permission to take driving lessons with a certified instructor)
- No drugs, cigarettes or alcohol
- Students must give details of any outings with friends
- Students must get permission from the International Director to go out of Dunedin
- Students must pay for cellphone calls, and any international calls made on the family landline.
- Students must not lend or borrow money, credit cards, or cell phones

Schedule of Fees:

The Schedule of Fees contains important information about the costs related to a student attending the school. These costs must be discussed with the parents or guardian before the student applies for a place also the refund policy must be clarified before entering any contract with the school.

Application For Enrolment:

It is important that the latest Application for Enrolment form is completed correctly, and the parents and student understand the Terms and Conditions attached before signing the contract. Please state any pre-existing medical conditions, as it is important to be aware of these before accepting the student and for insurance purposes. As stated on the form we require their latest Transcript, two testimonials as well as their birth certificate or passport.

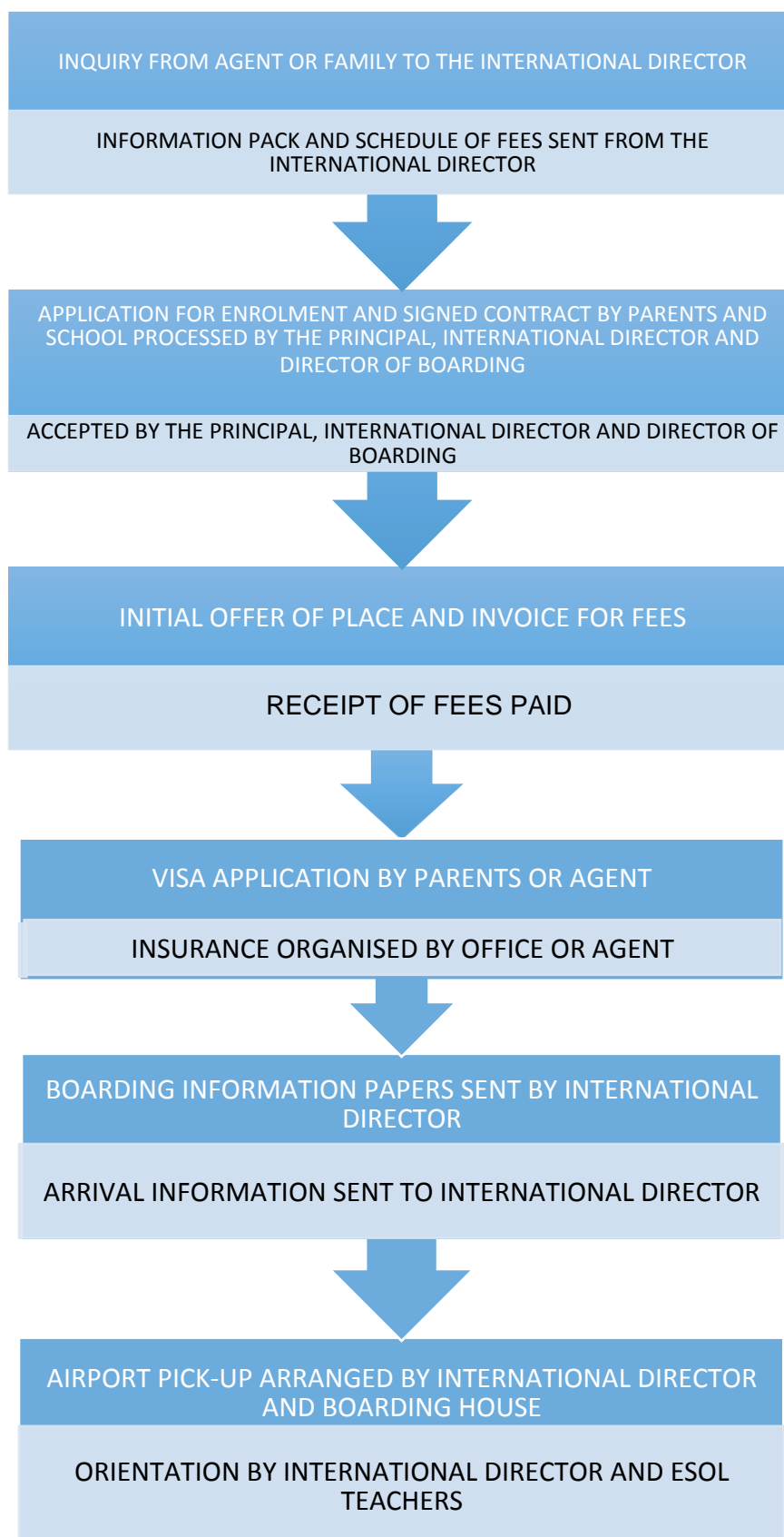
Visas:

Agents are required to organise the students prior to their arrival in the country. We will only assist with this if there are extenuating circumstances.

Columba College is now part of the pilot Pathway Visa scheme where a visa can be taken out for up to five years.

Please visit the Immigration New Zealand website for more information.

Flow chart of application procedure:



General Business Practices:

AGENT'S CHECK LIST

- Enrolment forms must be filled in correctly, preferably typed.
- When paying the fees please use the students name as a reference.
- State what they are paying for when remittance is made.
- State where accounts are to be sent; agent/parents or both.
- Letter stating whether child is to receive a weekly allowance and for how much. This is additional to the disbursement account.
- Payment for the school uniform is additional to the fees and only small items can be paid for from the disbursement account.
- Laptops can be purchased online through Cyclone. www.cyclone.co.nz then choose Columba College from the drop box. The User name is: Columba and the password is ccbyod. Laptops can also be purchased privately.
- The school office can pay private tuition fees but funds to cover this must be additional to the disbursement account.

AGENT COMMISSIONS AND REFUNDS

- Agent commissions need to be sent to jsabiston@columbacollege.school.nz and cc to smedary@columbacollege.school.nz
- Agent commissions will be paid on the 20th of the month following the receipt of the invoice. Those invoiced after the 20th of the month will be paid on the 20th of the following month. Agent commissions will only be paid for the current school year.
- Payments to International Bank accounts will not include GST.
- Refunds will be paid within 3 months of the student leaving the College.

Marketing Materials Links:

- enz.govt.nz
- dunedinnz.com/study
- Promotional materials and any inquiries can be made to The International Director smedary@columbacollege.school.nz
- Information on upcoming events and exhibitions is on the Columba International website <http://www.columbacollege.school.nz/international/welcome/>

Code of Practice Link:

www.nzqa.govt.nz/code-of-practice/2016

Pre-Arrival and Departure Information:

PLEASE ADVISE STUDENTS TO FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:

- Check out ENZ website
- Go to dunedinnz.com
- Talk to people particularly other students who have been to Dunedin.

TRAVEL CHECK LIST

- Confirm your travel arrangements and inform Columba College.
- Make sure you have packed the following:
 - Medical or optical prescriptions in English
 - Travel documents
 - Credit cards and some cash
 - Warm clothing
 - Full insurance policy in English if purchased by you.

IMPORTANT NOTE

- Ensure you pack your own bag and do not bring in bags any items belonging to other people.
- Inspect everything you carry into New Zealand personally.

ARRIVING IN NEW ZEALAND

Before your plane lands in NZ you will be given a NZ Passenger Arrival form to fill in. This contains immigration, Customs and Quarantine declarations. You must tick “yes” if any of the questions apply to you. If you have any problems the airline staff will be happy to help you.

At your first place of entry into New Zealand your passport and visa will be checked. Once your documents have been verified by immigration officials you then proceed to the baggage collection area.

QUARANTINE AND CUSTOMS

Items that must be declared include:

- Food, and products or ingredients used for preparing food
- Animals (alive or dead), or products from animals
- Equipment used with animals
- Camping gear, golf clubs, hiking boots

If you are unsure of any item in your luggage **DECLARE IT!** There is no penalty for declaring items, but a NZ\$200 instant fine if you do not declare an item. For more information, visit the MAF website.

TRANSFERS TO DOMESTIC TERMINAL

If you enter New Zealand at Auckland International airport you will need to transfer to the domestic terminal. You will find a blue line on the footpath outside the International terminal and can follow this line to the domestic terminal if you would like to walk. Otherwise, there is also a free bus which runs between the International and Domestic terminals from 6.00am until 10.30pm.

In Christchurch both the International and Domestic terminals are located in the same building.

AIRPORT PICK-UP

Columba College provides a meeting service for all new International students.

DEPARTURE FROM COLUMBA CHECKLIST FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- Flight information to International Director
- Travel plans if not leaving immediately to International Director
- All school textbooks returned
- All ESOL books returned
- All library books returned
- Taxi accounts paid
- Music and Speech accounts paid
- Uniforms dry cleaned
- All uniforms, laptops, schoolbags borrowed from the ESOL department returned
- Donations of unwanted clothing, personal items, stationery and old notes are all appreciated in the International Department

LEAVERS:

- Personal email addresses
- Bank account details
- University information e.g. applied for and accepted at

Orientation:

At Columba, the pastoral care of young women has been a priority for over 100 years. As a signatory of the NZ Ministry of Education's Code of Practice, Columba strives to ensure the mental and physical wellbeing of our international girls.

This commitment starts upon arrival, when new girls are met and welcomed by the Department's Director, Mrs. Sue Medary.

- Each girl is given a comprehensive handbook explaining all school systems and procedures.
- Students have a tour of the campus with opportunities to meet teachers and other students.
- The Director works out subject choices and timetables, and assists with IT compatibility, explains insurance entitlements, helps with the purchasing of school uniforms, opening a bank account, buying a cell phone or SIM card, and becoming familiar with the city and its facilities.

During this process the Director comes to know each international girl personally, to better effect close evaluation, goal setting and ESOL assistance.

Each girl is given the Director's cell phone number and through the Director, help is available 24/7.



Agent Responsibilities:

- Agents must be familiar with the Columba 'Brand' and promote it correctly
- Provide the student/parent with the necessary information in order to make informed decisions
- Discuss fees and refund policy
- Help with the Enrolment Applications and discuss the Terms and Conditions of the contract
- Be informed as to invoicing and Offer of Place
- Evaluate and screen prospective students to ensure that they meet the schools' standards and requirements
- Process student visas
- Organise or be aware of all flight information
- Maintain an ongoing relationship with both parents and students, acting as an intermediary when necessary
- Help with translating documents, emails, school reports and any other correspondence
- Be responsible for the student prior to the commencement date and after the departure date of their contract

For additional information and enquiries please contact:

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International Director

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New Zealand
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