



# **PREPARING FOR YOUR TIME IN NEW ZEALAND**

---

**STUDENT AND PARENT  
PRE-DEPARTURE  
INFORMATION**

## CONTENTS PAGE

---

Page 3	Welcome to New Zealand
Page 4	Your Region
Page 5	New Zealand Seasons and Climate
Page 6	New Zealand Currency
Page 7	Visa and Immigration
Page 8	What Should You Pack
Page 9	Things You Cannot Bring into New Zealand
Page 10	Travel and Medical Insurance
Page 12	Airports
Page 13	St Thomas More Catholic School, Mount Maunganui
Page 14	Term Dates and School Hours
Page 15	Emergency Contact and the Education Code of Practice
Page 16	Living in New Zealand
Page 18	Getting to School
Page 19	Final Thoughts
Page 20	Helpful Links

## WELCOME TO NEW ZEALAND

---

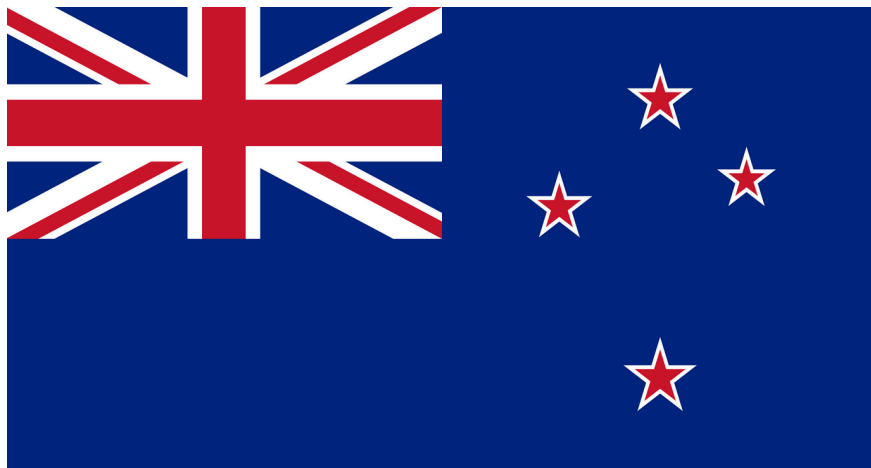
Welcome to New Zealand!

New Zealand is a special place to visit, travel and study. We have beautiful beaches, lovely forests, snowy mountains, green farmland, interesting cities and towns and friendly, welcoming people.

The population of New Zealand is 5.1 million people. English, Maori and New Zealand Sign Language are official languages, although most people speak English. .

New Zealand is a popular place for international students. We have an excellent educational system that is recognized around the world.

We are very glad you are coming to New Zealand and spending time in one of our schools. We hope you enjoy your time here, learn something new and make new friends.



## YOUR REGION

Below is a map of New Zealand. Can you find where you will be staying?



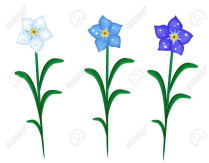
## NEW ZEALAND SEASONS AND CLIMATE

---

The average New Zealand temperature decreases as you travel south. January and February are our warmest months, and July is our coldest month of the year.

A helpful website to check the climate and weather in your region is:

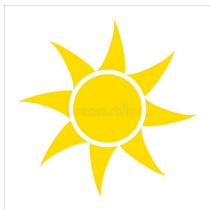
[www.newzealand.com/int/feature/new-zealand-climate-and-weather](http://www.newzealand.com/int/feature/new-zealand-climate-and-weather)



### **Spring**

September – November

Average daytime temperatures 16 - 19°C (61 - 66°F)



### **Summer**

December – February

Average daytime temperatures 20 - 25°C (68 - 77°F)



### **Autumn**

March – May

Average daytime temperatures 17 - 21°C (62 - 70°F)



### **Winter**

June – August

Average daytime temperatures 12 - 16°C (53 - 61°F)

The weather in New Zealand can change fast. Be prepared for changes in weather and temperature, particularly if doing outdoor activities.

## NEW ZEALAND CURRENCY

### Banking

- New Zealand banks are open from 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday.
- Automated Teller Machines (ATM's) are widely available at banks, on main shopping streets and in malls.
- International credit cards and ATM cards will work if you have a four-digit PIN code.
- Please check with your bank before leaving home.

### Bringing cash into New Zealand

- You can bring cash to New Zealand.
- However, if it is more than NZ\$10,000 in cash you must complete a Border Cash Report.

### Currency exchange

- Foreign currency can easily be exchanged at banks, some hotels and Bureau de Change kiosks which are found in international airports and most city centres.

### Currency values

- Coins have values of 10, 20, 50 cents, \$1 and \$2
- Notes have values of \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100

### Currency converter

A helpful website to convert currency is [www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter)





## VISA AND IMMIGRATION

---

Before travelling to New Zealand, you need to make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after your expected departure date.

- If you are studying for twelve weeks or less, you will need a visitor visa. If you are from a visa-waiver country, you may obtain this on arrival in NZ. If you are not from a visa-waiver country, you must apply for your visitor visa in your home country, as early as possible (at least eight weeks) before your travel date.
- If you are studying for more than twelve weeks, please apply for a student visa at least eight weeks before your departure date.

A helpful website to find out what you need to travel to New Zealand is:

[www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa](https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa)

You can find the list of New Zealand visa waiver countries here:

<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/preparing-a-visa-application/your-journey-to-new-zealand/before-you-travel-to-new-zealand/visa-waiver-countries>

Some visitors to New Zealand can travel here without a visa if they get an NZeTA before they travel. You can find out more about this and apply here:

<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/visas/visa/nzeta>

If a student who holds a student visa to study at the school acquires permanent residency, or a change of status through parental work visa or business visa, that student may not be eligible to remain enrolled at the school.

All students whose visa status changes must contact our International Student Administrator Jane: [secretary@stm.school.nz](mailto:secretary@stm.school.nz)



## WHAT SHOULD YOU PACK

Below are some items we suggest you pack for your time in New Zealand. Depending on the time of the year you are coming, you will need to bring different things.

### Essentials

- Return airline ticket
- Passport and current visa to study in New Zealand
- Travel/medical insurance policy
- Any medication you take
- Laptop and mobile phone
- Pocket money (if you have money to change into New Zealand dollars, please let your homestay parents / designated caregiver know and they will be able to assist with helping you to do this)
- Adapter plug(s) for electrical items. The electrical supply is 230/240 volts
- A few personal belongings to help your house feel like home

If you are bringing anything valuable (i.e. camera, phone, laptop etc), you **MUST** have copies of the purchase receipt. You will not be able to claim for insurance if you don't have proof of the purchase price.



### Spring/Summer

If you are coming during our spring and summer months we suggest:

- Swimwear
- Sunhat, sunglasses and sunscreen
- Shorts and/or skirts
- T shirts and/or short sleeve shirts
- Jumper and/or sweatshirt
- Light raincoat
- Good walking shoes and sandals
- Your choice of other clothing and footwear



## Autumn/Winter

If you are coming during our autumn and winter months we suggest:

- Warm waterproof jacket
- Jumper and/or sweater
- Long pants and/or jeans
- Long sleeved shirt and/or tshirt
- Scarf, hat and gloves
- Good walking shoes
- Your choice of other clothing and footwear

## Things You Cannot Bring into New Zealand

Some items are not allowed into New Zealand. These include food, plants and animal products. **YOU MUST DECLARE ANY FOOD YOU BRING WITH YOU.** These items include:

- Meat
- Eggs
- Dairy Products
- Dried mushroom and fungi
- Honey and honey products
- Seeds for human consumption and processing into food
- Nuts, spices, herbs and unpopped popcorn
- Dried, cooked or preserved fruit and vegetables
- Fresh fruit or vegetables

If you do not declare your items, you will be fined around NZ\$400.00 and the items will be taken from you.



## Travel and Medical Insurance

The New Zealand government requires you to have insurance to cover your travel and the cost of medical treatment during your stay in New Zealand. Insurance policies must be approved by the school and must meet the requirements of The Education (Pastoral of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

If you go to the doctor while you are in New Zealand, you will need to pay for the visit and then claim the cost back later with your insurance company. Ask the school to help you do this.

Please note that if you have a current medical condition we MUST know about this for insurance purposes.

To claim on your insurance for lost or stolen items, you must have your proof of purchase.

### Getting Insurance

As part of the requirements of being an International Student in New Zealand, you need to have insurance that will cover the cost of medical treatment for the duration of your stay in New Zealand.

Insurance policies must be approved by the school and must meet the requirements of the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016.

Companies who provide health insurance are:

Southern Cross: <https://www.scti.co.nz/our-policies/international-student/insurance/>

Uni-care: <https://www.uni-care.org/Policy/NzStudentPlan>

Student Safe:

<https://www.insurancesafenz.com/studentsafe/student-safe-inbound-learners>

Once you have booked your insurance, this must be approved by the school.

Please submit the schedule of cover (in English) to the school for checking. Please send to Jane: [secretary@stm.school.nz](mailto:secretary@stm.school.nz)

If no adequate insurance is provided, the school will book a policy and invoice the parents for all costs.

Your insurance must include:

1. the student's travel
  - a. to and from New Zealand; and

- b. b. within New Zealand; and
  - c. c. if the travel is part of the educational instruction, outside New Zealand; and
- 
- 1. medical care in New Zealand, including diagnosis, prescription, surgery, and hospitalisation; and
  - 2. repatriation or expatriation of the student as a result of serious illness or injury, including cover of travel costs incurred by family members assisting repatriation or expatriation; and
  - 3. death of the student, including cover of
    - a. travel costs of family members to and from New Zealand; and
    - b. costs of repatriation or expatriation of the body; and
    - c. funeral expenses.



Your flight into New Zealand will be either Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch. The process into the arrival area is the same of all airports.

Complete the New Zealand Traveller Declaration online [here](#). If you don't complete it online, you can complete a Paper Arrival Declaration on board the flight or when you arrive in New Zealand instead



If you do the paper version, give your Traveller Declaration to the Immigration Officer at Passport Control



The officer will check your passport, visa and Traveller Declaration card. They may ask you questions like: Where are you going to be staying? Where was your last destination? Do you have any food with you? Have you visited New Zealand before?



After your passport and visa has been checked you will get an Immigration New Zealand stamp in your passport



Your passport will be returned to you



Collect your bags from the baggage claim area



Your bags will go through an x-ray machine and inspectors might look in your bags



Once you have been cleared by Customs and Biosecurity you will walk through the arrival doors



Welcome to New Zealand!

## ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

### Website and Policies

This is the school's website: <https://stthomasmore.school.nz/>

You can find information on the school's policies for international students on our SchoolDocs site:



1. Visit: <https://stm.schooldocs.co.nz/1893.htm>
2. Enter the login details:
  - **Username:** *stm*
  - **Password:** *catholic*

### Orientation and School Uniform

Before starting at St Thomas More Catholic School, you'll be invited to an orientation session. This will ensure you have all the information you need for a smooth and successful start. During the orientation, we will also help you organise your school uniform.

Uniforms can be purchased from Jane in our school office once you arrive in New Zealand. Items can be purchased individually as needed.



You will be placed into a classroom alongside other children who will be similar in age to you. You will be given some buddies from within your class who will support you in the first few weeks of school. They will be your support people.

We will give you all of the stationery that you need to participate in class at your orientation. You may like to bring your own pens and pencils.

## Term Dates & School Hours 2026

### Term Dates:

- Term 1: Monday, 26 January - Thursday, 2 April.
- Term 2: Monday, 20 April - Friday, 3 July.
- Term 3: Monday, 20 July - Friday, 25 September.
- Term 4: Monday, 12 October - no later than Friday, 18 December.

### School hours are from 8.30am to 2.30pm:

Doors Open: 8.00am

Learning Starts: 8.30am

Morning Tea: 10.30am - 11.00am

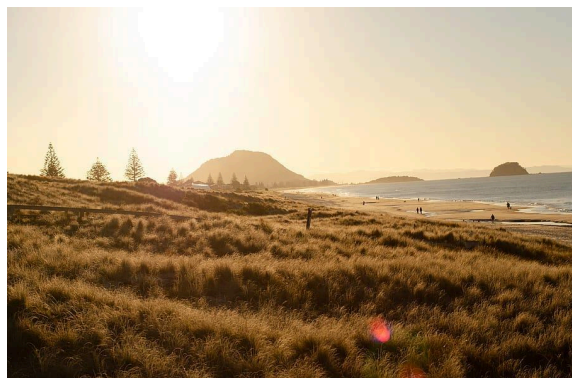
Lunch Eating: 12.30pm - 12.45pm

Lunch Playing: 12.45pm - 1.15pm

End of Day: 2.30pm

If your child is absent from school, you must contact Jane in the school by 8.30am (Phone 07 574 6782, or use etap to send a message to Jane in the office).

The weekend (Saturday and Sunday) is family time and school is not open on these two days. Many families attend Mass at our church, All Saints by the Sea during the weekend. You can learn about our Parish, including Mass Times [here](#).





## Emergency Contact

Our school's emergency contact is Lisa Broadmore Principal & International Student Manager - 021 028 27411. Please call this number if you need help when you're in New Zealand.

Schools and teachers are very good at caring for students from all around the world.

Please talk to someone at school about any worries or problems you have. Someone will be able to help you.

## The Education Code of Practice

St Thomas More Catholic School has agreed to observe and be bound by the "Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021" (the Code). Copies of the Code are available from the school or from New Zealand Qualifications Authority at: <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/>

### Complaints and Concerns

Students and parents may experience problems and difficulties in adjusting to life in New Zealand. Your child's classroom teacher will first address any problems. If you need further help, please contact the Deputy Principal Maree Thomas or Principal & International Student Manager Lisa Broadmore. If you are still not satisfied, you may address a complaint to the Board of Trustees.

If you think the school has breached the Code, or you are not happy with the way we have resolved your concerns, you can make a complaint to NZQA. For more information, see [HERE](#).

Study Complaints can help school international students to resolve financial and contractual disputes with their education provider. Please view their website for more information and/or to make a complaint: [Study Complaints](#).





Soon you will be going to school in New Zealand and you will be staying in a house and town or city that will be different from your home country.

To help you settle into your new home in New Zealand here is some information to think about:

### Accommodation

International students who are under 10 years of age must live with their parent or parents in New Zealand for the full duration of their stay.

The average cost of renting a 3 bedroom apartment or home in Mount Maunganui/Pāpāmoa/Tauranga is between \$700-900 per week.

Parents living with their children may obtain help finding rental accommodation through real estate agencies:

- <https://harcourts.co.nz>
- <https://www.evesrentals.co.nz/search/district/Tauranga/1/>
- <https://www.barfoot.co.nz/rent>
- <https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/property/residential/rent>

For more living costs and other useful information, see the following link:

- <https://www.naumainz.co.nz>

### Living Costs

What things cost:

- Meal at a restaurant: \$25-50
- Monthly cell phone plan: \$25-50
- Movie ticket: \$20
- Bus cost: \$3.50 each ride
- Big Mac: \$9

Pocket money

While you are at the school, you will need approximately \$50 per week for spending money. This is at the discretion of your parents.

See [HERE](#) for more information on the cost of living in New Zealand.



## Mobile Phone

You need to bring your mobile phone with you or buy one here. You can buy a New Zealand sim card and credit to make calls and send texts. It usually costs between \$35 and \$50 per month, depending on what mobile plan you choose. For more information, see:

- <https://www.skinny.co.nz/>
- <https://www.2degrees.nz/>

**Internet:** A home broadband internet package costs \$85-\$90 per month.

## Food at School

- Many students take their own lunch from home and they pack it in a lunch box. The foods students take varies but some examples are: sandwiches, sushi, fruit, raisons, muesli bars, yoghurt, biscuits, crackers, sliced raw vegetables, small snack bags of chips or nuts or dried fruit.
- At St Thomas More Catholic School you can order lunch on certain days of the week. Please check this with Jane in the school office once you start.
- Just remember, food in New Zealand may be different to what you are used to - always try it first, then if you don't like it then it is okay not to eat it again.
- While eating at school, watch other student's manners. What is accepted in your culture may not be in New Zealand. Some New Zealanders think it is rude to burp or slurp, reach in front of others, or eat with your mouth open. Try not to. This is part of learning about another culture. Neither is right or wrong – they are just different.



## Getting to School

- After the first day of school, if you are close enough you might walk to school or ride a bike, or you might drive in the car with your family.
- We drive on the left side of the road, so if you are crossing a road you need to be very careful— make sure you look both ways! Look right, then left, then right again....then cross the road.
- People living in New Zealand use different ways to get around – walk, bike, skateboard, scooter, car and bus.



## Friends Visiting

- In New Zealand many students visit their friends after school and in the weekends.
- If you would like to invite a friend to visit your home, please ask your parent first and then arrange a day and time. It is a good way for your family to meet other New Zealand families too.
- By having friends and going to their houses or having them visit you, you will widen your cultural experience, improve your English and of course have fun spending time with your friends.



## Please Ask

- If you are not sure about anything, please ask.
- In New Zealand it is a good thing to ask questions. If something upsets you, confuses you or makes you angry please talk with someone at your school.
- Talking always helps.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

---

Congratulations on challenging yourself to travel and stay in a new country and culture.

We are looking forward to meeting you and hope you enjoy your time with us.

If you have any other questions, please email Jane - [secretary@stm.nz](mailto:secretary@stm.nz)



## HELPFUL LINKS

---

For many international students and their families, life in New Zealand is quite different from their home countries. The following links provide useful information about life in New Zealand and will help you prepare for your time in a New Zealand school.

- **Naumai NZ:** <https://naumainz.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz/>

Information and suggestions to help you find your way, connect and explore your new home.

- **Tourism New Zealand:** [www.tourismnewzealand.com](http://www.tourismnewzealand.com)

Tourism New Zealand's offers some valuable information about tourism opportunities for families while in New Zealand.

- **100% Pure New Zealand:** [www.newzealand.com/int/](http://www.newzealand.com/int/)

100% Pure New Zealand offers some valuable suggestions and information about tourism opportunities for families while in New Zealand

- **Study in New Zealand:** [www.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz](http://www.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz)

The official Government site for advice on studying abroad in New Zealand. This site offers information on a range of courses at universities, institutes and schools. You can also read student stories of real life experiences and learn important information about the costs of living in New Zealand.

- **Immigration New Zealand's Studying in New Zealand:**  
<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/assist-migrants-and-students/assist-students>

- This site offers information about studying in New Zealand, student life and working while studying. This site also offers information about visa options for students and families.

- **NZQA's Studying in New Zealand:** [www.nzqa.govt.nz/studying-in-new-zealand](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/studying-in-new-zealand)

This site offers further information about New Zealand qualifications, secondary school and NCEA, Tertiary education and quality assurance of education in New Zealand.

- **New Zealand Now:** [www.newzealandnow.govt.nz](http://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz)

This Government website share information about living, working, studying and investing in New Zealand as well as information about visas, job prospects and the great lifestyle here.

- **Education New Zealand:** [www.enz.govt.nz](http://www.enz.govt.nz)

Education New Zealand (ENZ) raises awareness of New Zealand as a study destination and supports education providers and businesses to export their services and products.

- **Disputes Resolution Scheme:** [Study Complaints](#)

Study Complaints supports students to resolve complaints about contracts of fees with their education provider.