



Thames High School
Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kāuaeranga
PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION





Thames High School
Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kauaeranga



Thank you for deciding on Thames High School as part of your overseas school adventure. We are thrilled about you joining us for your international study experience.

As the International Programme Manager at Thames High School, I am responsible for the well-being and happiness of our international students to ensure their positive experiences. I support their pastoral needs by ensuring their health, safety, and emotional well-being while away from home - I act as a supportive liaison between them, their families, and teachers. I aim to integrate international students smoothly into the school community, ensuring their academic and social success.



PAULINE MANAGH
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME MANAGER
international@thameshigh.school.nz



Kia kōtahi ai te piki ake, kia ikeike rawa ki te taumata / We grow together to achieve ones true potential



About Thames High School

Thames High School is a school of around 400 students, so is quite small and friendly. In 2025 we will have between 20 and 22 international students from different countries. Our international students make very good friends with each other and with our local students. Thames High School offers an excellent balance between academic courses and interest-based courses like outdoor education and music.



Homestays

All international students are placed in a homestay whose family has been vetted and approved by the International Student Department. Careful consideration is taken before placing a student and we try and match to interests and hobbies.

Our international students are welcomed into that family as fully functioning members and are guaranteed a single private bedroom, with a comfortable bed, storage and a desk.

Homestay families can be chosen from town, outlying areas, beach or farm locations, depending on your interests and needs. Most homestay families are located in the township of Thames, so school and amenities are within easy walking distance.

If placed on a farm or along the coast, there is a free school bus each day to transport the students to and from Thames.

Throughout the stay, all aspects of accommodation are closely monitored and support staff and procedures are in place should the student need assistance.



JUSTINA LARDNER-BURKE
HOMESTAY COORDINATOR

The school and Homestays expect international students to:

Abide by the High School's International rules.

- **Participate in the family's activities (eg: chores, family movies, sports and family holidays).**
- No drinking alcohol under or over the age of 18
- No drugs
- No overnight stays with friends during the week.
- Students must give details of any outings with friends to their homestay family, including destination and expected time home.
- Phone your homestay family if you will be late home
- No driving cars or riding in cars with other students on a restricted license
- Be at home at night during the week unless you are at a school or family function
- Ask permission of your family and school, to go out of the Thames region
- Ask permission of the Homestay Manager if wanting to sleep out at any other place other than the homestay. Make sure the application form is completed and given to the Homestay Manager at least two days before you would like to leave.
- Be sensitive to what times the family goes to bed at night.
- Friends are also to pay for all international phone calls / cell phone calls / internet use
- Tell the High School of any problems
- Be open with your family as to who you invite into the home
- Follow the Thames High School rules regarding hours of attendance, providing absence notes, smoking, uniform and leaving the school grounds.
- Do not lend or borrow money, credit cards or mobile phones.
- Do homework and personal study.
- **Share aspects of your culture with your family eg: cook a meal, share your music, talk to them about your country.**

Clothing

December to February is our summer with temperatures of between 20°C and 30°C. Autumn from March to May is also warm with temperatures mostly in the early 20's during the day. June, July and August is wintertime in New Zealand. Temperatures range from around 1°C to 18°C during this time. It can be wet with a good mix of rain, fine days and frosty mornings. September through to November is spring and the days can be warm. Temperatures during this time ranging between 16°C and 25°C.

Please pack the following essential items required for most International and Outdoor Education trips:

'MUST HAVE' GEAR LIST:

- 100% Waterproof jacket
- Swimwear
- Wide brimmed hat
- Thermal leggings and thermal t-shirts (long and short sleeved)
- Woollen jersey
- Gloves (preferable waterproof)
- Beanie
- Thermal socks
- Comfortable walking / tramping shoes or boots
- Hiking day backpack

School Uniform

International staff will help you purchase your school uniform on arrival. We suggest you purchase your school shoes before coming to New Zealand. Here are our guidelines for school shoes:

Footwear

Plain black shoes

- ✓ **Plain black shoes (no visible brands/logos or markings) with plain black crew socks****
 - Worn clean and in good condition.

Plain black shoes are completely black and there are no obvious brands/logos visible.

OR

- ✓ **Plain black sandals with a back strap***
 - No socks to be worn with sandals.
- ✓ See below for some examples (these show the 'look' and are not meant to be exhaustive).
- ✓ We welcome inquiries to check that shoes are suitable.

These are covered shoes. For some areas like workshops and labs, covered shoes are required.

* Backstrap is for safety in crowds
** The older THS double gold-band long socks are also acceptable for Years 10-13.

Socks or stockings (with shoes)

- ✓ Plain black 'crew' socks (short to lower calf) **
OR
- ✓ Plain (not ribbed or patterned) black stockings.



Sandals

Traditionally a Roman Sandal, and some do prefer a flatter sandal, but there are several styles of sandal where there is good arch support. Not Birkenstocks (or similar) without a back strap or Crocs, with or without a back strap. No slides.



Laptops / Phones

Having your own laptop or ipad is not compulsory but if you would like to bring it with you, you are more than welcome.

Mobile Phones and SIM Cards

It is very important that all international students have a New Zealand SIM card and active phone credit at all times. This ensures that you are always contactable by your homestay parents and by the school, and that you can make calls in an emergency.

SIM cards will be provided during our orientation on first day of school, and it is your responsibility to keep your phone topped up with credit; for making normal calls or texts and important communication rather than relying on Wi-Fi apps such as WhatsApp or Messenger.





Student Orientation

All students will have the opportunity to participate in an orientation programme that provides the information and advice necessary for a successful and enjoyable stay at Thames High School.



This is a relaxed and fun programme that includes learning about our school timetable, exploring our school grounds, meeting other new international students, trying on your Thames High School uniform, discussing school rules and handy hints for getting on with your host family.

School Ball

Depending on when you arrive and depart, you may have the opportunity to attend our school ball.

In 2026 the Ball is scheduled for 20 June. Year's 12 & 13 students are invited to attend.

Formal dress is required and you may like to bring a dress/formal clothing with you. The cost to attend the ball will be approximately \$120 NZD.

Airport Arrivals & Customs Procedure

All hiking/outdoor shoes and/or boots must be clean. Please: NO plant, animal or dairy products.

Transport

There is a free school bus service operating around Thames area before and after school daily.

A taxi service operates (at a cost) during evenings and weekends. This can be a good option if there are a number of students wanting to use the service together, and share the costs.

Our host families are also able to provide a reasonable amount of transport to support you in your extra-curricular and social activities.

These three options above are the only means of transport within and around Thames.

Travel

Travel Policy

International students are welcome to explore New Zealand during their stay. However, all travel must be approved in advance by the International Department.

Under the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2021, the school must ensure students are supervised by approved adults and are staying in safe and suitable accommodation.

To request approval:

- Complete a Request to Travel Form and submit it at least two weeks before travel.
- The form must include signed permission from your parents or caregivers.

New Zealand Tours

During school holidays, many exciting and safe tours are available for international students to experience New Zealand's culture, scenery, and adventure. You can find out more and book tours after you arrive in Thames. All tours must be approved by the International Programme Manager before any bookings or payments are made.

Transport for Holiday Tours – Auckland Airport

If you are planning to take part in a booked tour during the school holidays and will need transport to or from Auckland Airport, please make sure to include the cost of shuttle services as part of your overall trip budget. Please note that it is not the responsibility of your homestay parents or school staff to provide transport to the airport. Students are not permitted to travel by public bus. A shuttle service will be arranged by the international staff. The cost is typically between \$250 and \$350 per trip.



Activities

International students enjoy both the opportunity to take Outdoor Education and practical subjects such as art, photography, mechanical engineering, materials technology and hospitality, which is different from what they're used to.

International students participate in a range of exciting extra-curricular events and excursions as part of their New Zealand experience. Trips and events that have been enjoyed over the years are:

- Surfing at Whangamata
- Fishing in the Coromandel
- Zip-lining in the Coromandel
- Skiing
- Parliament school excursion to the capital city Wellington
- Zorb rides in Rotorua
- Visits to Hobbiton
- Kayaking

International Food Festival

The annual event where international students and Kiwi students come together at Thames High School to plan and prepare delicious food is an amazing and culturally enriching tradition. This event not only promotes diversity and cultural understanding but also creates a sense of unity and community within the school.

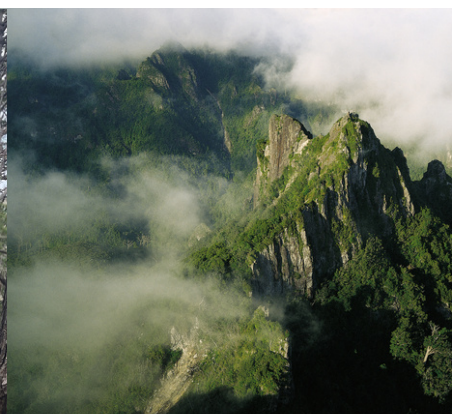
The event provides a unique opportunity for students from diverse cultural backgrounds to share their culinary traditions with the school community. It's a platform for cultural exchange, where students can learn about and appreciate the food and customs of their peers from different countries.

End of Year Programme / Hillary Outdoors

For students who enrol for Term 4 which is at the end of the year, we provide an end-of-year programme of fun activities while our domestic students are participating in examinations.

As part of this programme we offer a week at the Hillary Outdoor experience in the Coromandel at an additional cost.

• Subject to change





A Brief History of the School & Thames



Thames High School / Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kauaeranga, was founded in 1880 and the land on which it sits was gifted by the local Māori iwi/tribe called Ngāti Maru. The school is the second oldest secondary school in the Auckland province.

Thames has a rich history tied to the mana whenua / land of Hauraki, the gold rush (1867-1871), and Kauri logging. Ngāti Maru, part of the Marutūahu confederation, has been settled in the area since around 1550. Thames, with a population of approximately 7,600, is the largest town on the Coromandel Peninsula and serves as a key hub for local governance, healthcare, retail, and tourism.



Our Vision

Kia kōtahi ai te piki aki, kia ikeike rawa ki te taumata
We grow together to achieve one's true potential.



Our Mission

Kia mahana o neherā
Kia aratakina āianeī
Hei waihanga ā mua

Acknowledge our past
Inspire our present
Transform our future world



Our Values / Tikanga

Whakamana

We build each other up, supporting identity & enhancing mana.

Mātautanga

We deepen our knowledge of understanding to empower learning.

Manaakitanga

Everyone belongs, everyone matters, and everyone has potential.

Whakapono

We are honest and show integrity in all we do.

Whanaungatanga

We build connected & collaborative relationships that acknowledge & embrace our community

Students enjoy Charter Fishing



Students enjoy Black Water Rafting



Students enjoy Hot Water Beach



We look forward to seeing you soon!