

Wellington education

NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION SYSTEM

All children must attend school from the age of six to 16 years. Most children start school as soon as they turn five and many leave when they reach 17 or 18 years of age.

► THERE ARE FIVE LEVELS OF EDUCATION:

- **early childhood**, ages 1–4
- **primary**, ranges from Years 1–6, ages 5–10
- **intermediate**, Years 7–8, ages 10–13
- **secondary**, Years 9–13, ages 13–19
- **tertiary**, age 18+

For more information about the school system, visit the 'Our education system' section on the Ministry of Education website, minedu.govt.nz or phone 463 8699.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

For children up to five years of age, early childhood education is available from a range of providers, including kindergartens, play centres, childcare centres, home-based networks, play groups and Te Kohanga Reo (Māori language nests).

It is best to ask for prices, as charges vary. Children aged three and four enrolled in centre-led early childhood centres qualify for free early childhood education for up to 20 hours a week.

To find out more about early childhood education, visit ece.govt.nz or phone 463 8699. A list of ECE providers in Wellington is available from the website yellowpages.co.nz – type in 'childcare and education'.

PRIMARY, INTERMEDIATE AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

If you have a work visa and paid employment, or New Zealand Permanent Residency status, then your children can get free education through the government-funded school system. Alternatively, you may choose to send your children to an independent or private school where you will have to pay fees.

At primary, intermediate and secondary level there is a choice between single sex, co-educational, public and private schools.

The school year is divided into four terms which begin in late January and end in late November for secondary schools, and mid-December for primary schools. For the exact term dates visit minedu.govt.nz

To avoid overcrowding, some schools have an enrolment zone which gives priority to children living there. Check to see whether a school has an enrolment zone, and whether you live in it. You can find out more about a school by asking for an information brochure, and you could also ask to visit and meet with the principal and staff.

► ENROLLING A CHILD IN A SCHOOL

Telephone the school of your choice and make an appointment to speak with the principal. At the appointment, you may want to share information about your child and ask about the staff who are likely to be teaching your child and who you should talk to regularly about your child's progress. If you have religious or cultural beliefs – this is the time to explain them so the school is aware of any requirements.

You will need to explain who is allowed to collect your children from school and who to contact in case of illness or an accident. The school will treat this as private information that they do not give to others.

You can find out the list of schools in Wellington at the website tki.org.nz/schools/wellington-region

► OUT-OF-SCHOOL CARE

The out-of-school care and recreational programmes (OSCAR) are before-school, after-school and school holiday programmes – including camps – for children aged five to 14. They are recreation-based programmes that aim to meet children's needs in their out-of-school hours in a safe and fun way.

The government may help to pay some of the fees. Check if your child qualifies at the website workandincome.govt.nz or phone 0800 559 009.



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► SECONDARY SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is the national public examination system in secondary schools and usually is taken from Year 11 onwards

- **Year 11** NCEA level 1 (age 15)
- **Year 12** NCEA level 2 (age 16)
- **Year 13** NCEA level 3 (age 17)

High-performing students in Year 13 can take the New Zealand Scholarship qualification. For more information about NCEA and this qualification visit nzqa.govt.nz/ncea

► SCHOOL QUALITY STANDARDS

The Education Review Office reviews the quality of education in all New Zealand schools every three to four years, and reviews early childhood centres every four to five years. For more information visit the Education Review Office website, ero.govt.nz



► SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education services are available for children with physical, intellectual, hearing or vision difficulties, problems with learning, communicating, socialising, emotional and behavioural issues. These services aim to help children take part as fully as possible in their schooling.

For more detailed information about special education check the Ministry of Education website minedu.govt.nz or phone 0800 622 622.

TERTIARY EDUCATION

► UNIVERSITIES

All university students must be able to communicate in English, and most universities require a level of English competence as an entry requirement. International students must pay the full rate of tuition fees.

Three of New Zealand's eight universities have campuses in Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Massey University and the Otago Medical School from Dunedin which has a department at Wellington Hospital. Contact details are:

- **Victoria University of Wellington** – phone 0800 842 864 or visit vuw.ac.nz

- **Massey University** – phone 801 5799 or visit massey.ac.nz
- **Otago Medical School** – phone 385 5541 or visit wnmeds.ac.nz

► OTHER TERTIARY EDUCATION PROVIDERS

There are many other tertiary education providers in Wellington that offer degrees, diplomas and certificates in vocational, technical, and professional fields. Some offer distance learning.

Contact them directly for more information about their courses and enrolment, and for information on registered training organisations in Wellington, check the New Zealand Qualification Authority's website nzqa.govt.nz or phone 0800 623 243.

HELP WITH THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Help to improve your English is available through English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes at most universities and tertiary institutions.

For a list of English language institutions available in Wellington, visit tec.govt.nz or phone 0800 601 301. As well, the ESOL Assessment and Access Service in Wellington City can provide specialist advice about the best ESOL programme to suit your needs. Visit their website esolservices.co.nz or phone 384 8618. As well, some services have free or low-cost English classes in Wellington City, including:

- **Multicultural Learning and Support Service (MCLaSS),** mclass.org.nz

- **English Language Partners Wellington, englishlanguage.org.nz**
- **Adult community education classes** – these programmes offer a range of courses, including ESOL. Some courses take place at night or on weekends. Providers include:

- **Victoria University of Wellington** – phone 463 6566 or visit ceed.vuw.ac.nz
- **Wellington High School** – phone 385 8919 or visit cecwellington.ac.nz
- **Onslow College** – phone 477 1118 or visit onslow.school.nz

PNW/CB7292-SSVZ Wellington Education October 2011



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