

New Zealand School Requirements

Each school has different requirements and standards about uniforms, attendance, discipline, homework, and transport. When you are choosing a school you will be given information on these aspects.

Attendance

Parents or guardians are legally responsible for making sure children are enrolled at, and regularly attend, school between the ages of six and 16 years.

If a child cannot go to school on a particular day, the school should be advised by 9:00am. Most schools have a special phone number, or absence line, for reporting absences. Children may be excused from school for such standard things as medical and dental appointments and for special family reasons. Parents or guardians may also request that a child be excused from religious or sex education classes.

Uniforms

Most schools require students to wear a uniform at all times unless the school has an optional uniform policy. School uniforms are sold by most major department stores. Some schools also operate their own Uniform Shops and sell both new and second-hand items.

Discipline

Teachers are not allowed to physically punish students in their care. Legal disciplinary methods include removal of privileges, extra homework or detention. Parents or guardians are advised in advance if a child is given detention, as this will require the child to stay at school for a specified time after the end of the standard school day.

For serious offences, students may be suspended from school for a period of time. If they are over 16, they can be expelled permanently. Expulsion generally occurs when a student's conduct either sets a dangerous example to other students or threatens their safety. There are formal procedures for suspending or expelling a student.

Homework

Most secondary and primary schools expect students to do homework. Each school has its own rules on the amount and type of homework.

School transport

Parents or guardians are responsible for ensuring that a child can get to school. Each year, about 100,000 children use school buses. Although school bus services are contracted by the Ministry of Education, students are expected to meet the cost of fares. If a child has to travel a long distance to school, and there is no public transport or school bus service, financial assistance can be provided. Financial assistance and/or bus and taxi services are provided for special education students.