



Columba  
College



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Become part of our story



YOUR STORY BEGINS

# 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 everyone of them can make a difference.

*Haere mai ki te  
tohatoha tō korero  
ki a mātou, kei reira  
koe tau ai.*

*Come and share  
your story with us,  
and find the place  
where you belong.*

**Pauline Duthie**  
Principal





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.*



## VALUES AND MISSION

# 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.

STRATEGIC PLAN

# 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.



## NEW BOARDING HOUSE - 2022

One of the biggest objectives of the strategic plan is a new campus vision.

This started in 2020 with a redevelopment of the Junior School and the building of an all-weather turf. It continues into 2021 and 2022 with Stage One of the Boarding Village. This new 46 bed hostel will be purpose built with the modern teenage girl in mind. This will enable the subsequent development of the Middle School campus on the Katharine Buchan House site.

## 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.



*Columba College has consistently remained one of New Zealand's top performing academic schools.*

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EDUCATION

# Our Approach

*Children have a wonderful capacity to learn. They are curious, imaginative, capable and creative. The stimulating environment at Columba enhances that natural love of learning.*





## JUNIOR SCHOOL YEARS 0-6

Children have a wonderful capacity to learn. They are curious, imaginative, capable and creative. The stimulating environment at Columba enhances that natural love of learning.

In the Junior School, you can expect the very best education for your daughter or son taught by dedicated staff who embrace our values in a family environment.

With its own campus, the Junior School comprises of six co-educational classes from New Entrants to Year 6. Completely refurbished in 2020, the Junior School is a vibrant, happy, future ready, learning space.

Class sizes are kept smaller and additional staffing is allocated over entitlement so that learning enhancement and extension can occur. In addition the students have the benefit of specialist teaching in areas such as Music and Languages as well as the use of specialist facilities in the Middle and Senior Schools.

Because of a wide range of co-curricular activities and opportunities. Columba will give your daughter or son the opportunity to try different sports, play an instrument or perform on stage. We believe that it is important to nurture your child's strengths and abilities both inside and outside the school community.

Our approach to teaching and learning is underpinned by a seamless, integrated curriculum promoting life-long learners. All students are encouraged to strive for personal excellence and become responsible members of Columba College and the wider community.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS 7-10

Years 7 and 9 are important entry points for day and boarding girls. Most of the students entering the College come from a wide cross-section of other schools in the city and lower South Island.

The Middle School is led by the Head of Middle School and assisted by two Deans – the Middle School Dean and Year 7 Dean. The girls at these levels benefit from having classes with specialist teachers and contact with older students while still maintaining their own identity. This enhances the “family spirit” of the College. Students in Years 12 and 13 also enjoy the leadership opportunity provided by being a Class Senior to a Middle School student.

For Middle School students the curriculum is a unified and purposeful programme that prioritises literacy and numeracy as the basis for all successful learning, and strives to build solid foundations in the skills.

We believe learning a language other than English is an essential skill and students can choose from French, German or Chinese. Te Reo is taught as part of the curriculum from Years 1 - 9 with an option of taking this language into senior years. Girls are also able to explore commerce and the visual and performing arts alongside core courses in Social Sciences, Mathematics, Science, Religious Studies and Physical Education and Health. Students also have the opportunity to work collaboratively and cross-curricular and develop passion projects.





## SENIOR SCHOOL YEARS 11-13

For our Year 11, 12 and 13 students we aim to provide a senior curriculum that maximises opportunities to meet each individual's learning aspirations and that encourages each student to identify, seek out and achieve personal excellence in learning.

Our curriculum remains broad in the senior school, and our NCEA and Scholarship results are among the highest in New Zealand. Our philosophy is to enrich the curriculum for each student and to provide opportunities which extend and challenge everyone. To help achieve this we provide highly qualified, committed and experienced staff, a high standard of resources and a diverse range of options. This includes courses delivered through other organisations, such as our association with University of Otago and our collaboration with our brother school, John McGlashan College so our students can access an even wider range of specialist subjects.

Each year students succeed to the highest standards possible in national examinations and successfully compete for tertiary scholarships. The Head of Senior School and Senior School Dean are willing and able to assist with maximising student opportunities and provide teaching support to extend and challenge each and every one.

Columba provides leading teaching and learning facilities including: specialist chemistry and physics laboratories, photography and design spaces, a bespoke theatre for drama, common areas for student gatherings, recording areas and as part of future strategic planning a virtual reality cloud suite.

OUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME

# Boarding

*Boarding is an integral part of the Columba community – adding life and vitality to the fabric of our school.*

*The experience offers the reward of greater independence, abundant co-curricular activities and life long friendships.*





### Meet Amy -

“It was a bit nerve-racking coming to Columba at the start but I quickly adjusted to the ‘boarder’ life being everyone being so welcoming and supportive. Making friends is really easy and the opportunities here compared to my school at home are amazing.”

At Columba College, our boarders are surrounded by people who genuinely care for their happiness and welfare. Our Director of Boarding heads a dedicated team who support students in a wonderful family atmosphere.

Our boarding house is always bustling with life and our staff are integral to creating that safe, supportive, happy environment. Young women flourish at our boarding house, gaining in confidence, independence and resilience.

We offer boarding places to students from Years 7-13 in a community that emphasises trust, promotes involvement and establishes life-long connections. Bishopscourt is home to the Year 7-11 boarders while senior students currently have their own space in Katharine Buchan House. In 2022, seniors will move to a new purpose built boarding facility.

Boarding students are fully involved in the co-curricular life of the school. The boarding house has its own transport that ensures all students are able to participate in as many activities as possible.

Columba places great importance of its boarding being situated on-site for reasons of both safety and accessibility. Students can benefit from many facilities – gymnasium and fitness room, playgrounds, tennis courts, artificial hockey turf, music rooms, library and other recreational areas.



*Columba College embraces our small but vibrant international community and the cultural diversity they bring to our school life.*



## 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.

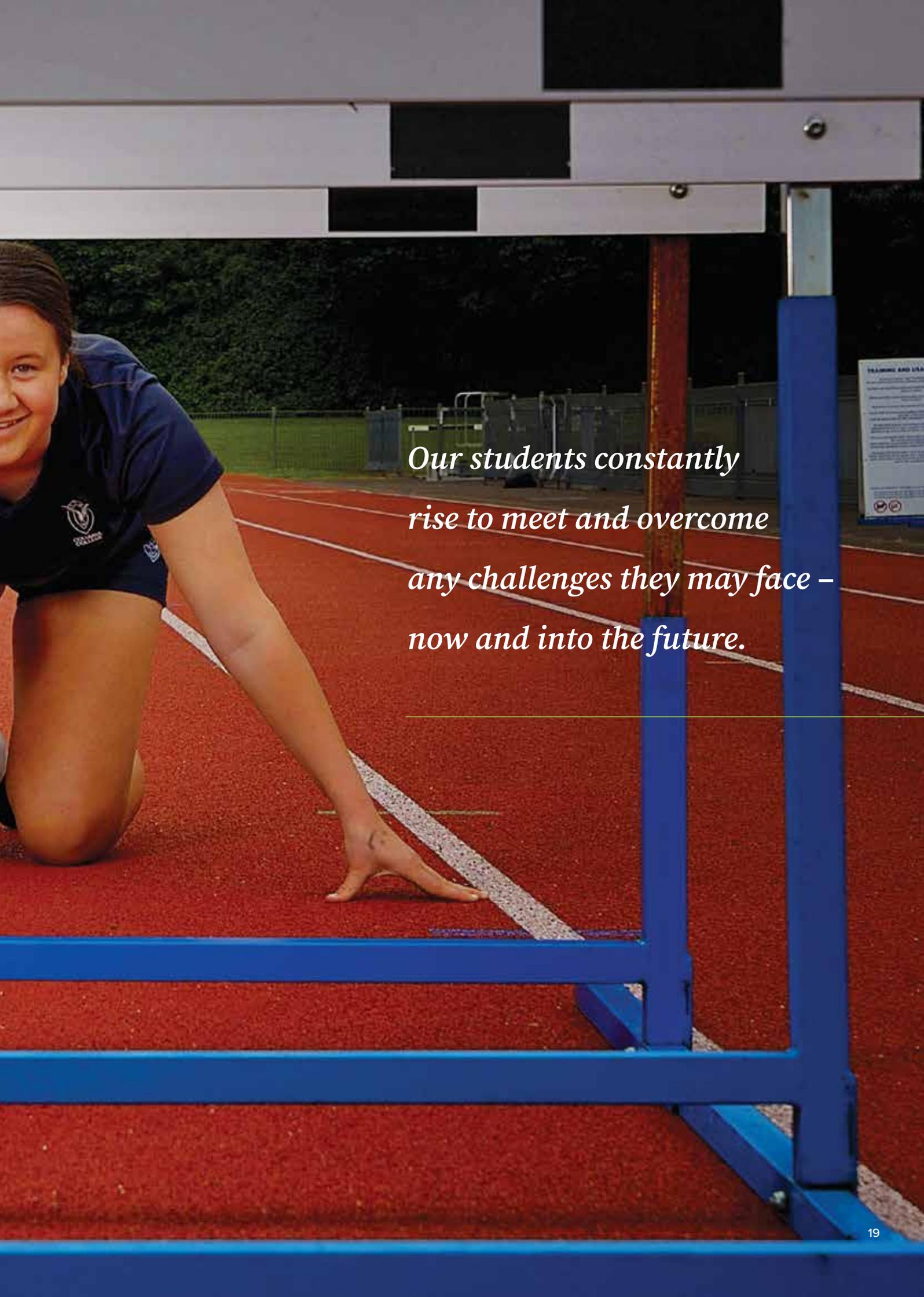
Columba College offers a fully integrated academic programme for students from overseas. Our results are among the top in Otago and New Zealand. Each student's individual programme is assessed and mentored from the outset and each student is given the language support needed to achieve academic and pastoral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



### **Meet Molly -**

"I have always wanted to go to Columba after Dad told me Mum went here. When I first went to look around the boarding hostel I fell in love knowing it would be like a sleepover with my friends every night!"



*Our students constantly  
rise to meet and overcome  
any challenges they may face –  
now and into the future.*

NCEA, UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE  
& SCHOLARSHIPS

## Achievements

Columba College is one of New Zealand's top performing academic schools.

A 2020 study by the NZ Initiative, published by the NZ Herald in August 2020 concluded, "*Religious and State Integrated Schools beat private and state schools in adjusted UE results*". In this study Columba ranked 1st in Otago, 3rd in the South Island and 12th in New Zealand for all types of secondary schools.

Our focus at Columba is to support each and every one of our students to reach their very best, no matter which endeavour they pursue and at which point they begin.

Columba performs highly in NCEA Level 1, 2 and 3 at both Pass and Endorsement. Scholarships are consistently gained.

In 2020, tertiary scholarships across academic, sports, Maori and the arts were offered to the Year 13 Columba cohort in excess of \$500,000.





FIND YOUR NICHE

# Unique Programmes

*Excellence is central to all parts of our curriculum and our staff work hard to ensure that our students experience a full and varied education.*





### **CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE AND BUSINESS**

Columba College and John McGlashan College are proud to be collaborating as New Zealand lead schools in delivering an exciting Agribusiness course. We are at the forefront of this work, being two of just eight Centre of Excellence lead schools in New Zealand.

### **CONFUCIUS CLASSROOM**

The first Confucius Classroom in the South Island of New Zealand was established at Columba College in 2012.

Through our affiliation as a Confucius Classroom with the University of Canterbury we are fortunate to have a full-time Mandarin Language Assistant to assist with our Chinese language programmes.

### **GOETHE INSTITUT**

Columba has strong ties to the Goethe Institut. This prestigious link is particularly important for our students studying German, offering exchange programmes and extension opportunities.

### **KIVA**

Columba is pleased to work with Victoria University, Wellington, in introducing this world recognised Finnish programme. KiVa, meaning kindness, actively teaches students in Years 1-10 about resilience and learning together confidently. KiVa strengthens our Pastoral Care Network.

## 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.

Arts Blues are awarded annually to students showing excellence and consistent participation in College cultural activities. The disciplines covered by the award of an Arts Blue include Dance, Debating, Drama, Kapa Haka, Languages, Music, Performing Arts, Public Speaking, Speech and Drama, Visual Arts and Writing.

The annual Inter-House Debating Competition, Book Week and Cultural Heritage Week all add enjoyment to school life with students actively involved in their organisation and leadership. An annual Creative Writing Competition has also been introduced successfully. It is named after two Old Girls: The Elspeth Sandys Creative Writing Award for Prose and The Cilla McQueen Creative Writing Award for Poetry. Both are noted New Zealand writers. The College also provides an opportunity for private music and speech & drama tuition.

### Meet Amelia -

"I love the amount of sporting opportunities I get at Columba – volleyball, netball, basketball to name just a few. On top of that I get to indulge in my passion for singing as well as drama. Who knows where it will take me? "







### Meet Jendi -

“Columba has offered me so many opportunities that I couldn't have back home in Southland. I'm getting to do rowing - which I love, and heaps of other things. Boarding is like a second home to me and has given me the chance to make heaps of new friends. Give it a chance. It's amazing!”

## SPORTS

Columba College recognises that sporting activities play an important part in helping students reach their full potential and in nurturing their overall well-being.

As such our aim is to provide the best possible coaching, resources and facilities, and give students the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of sports and sporting activities. Columba College is recognised for its high achievements in many sports, with the added distinction of having several present and numerous past students representing New Zealand.

There is something for everyone, from the high achiever in sport who becomes an Otago representative, or who is awarded a South Island or national distinction, to the student who enjoys playing social sport. With a longer-term focus of developing leisure activities and pursuits for the years beyond school, personal fitness and healthy activity for students while at Columba College are strongly encouraged.

Annual Inter-house sporting competitions are held in the athletics, swimming and cross country. Further, Columba College participates in annual summer and winter Tournaments with St. Andrew's College, and an annual traditional winter Quadrangular Tournament with other top performing South Island schools. The school competes successfully in the national summer and winter tournaments in a variety of codes.

Over 30 sports are currently available at the school.

Facilities include: full size gymnasium, netball and tennis courts, all weather hockey and futsal practice turf, spin bike and rowing studio, circuit training with full Wexer programme and our own rowing shed with assorted rowing and support boats on the harbour.

## WELL-BEING

Wellbeing is about people feeling good and functioning well.

Fundamental to supporting wellbeing at the College is our Pastoral Care Network. Since its inception the College has carefully nurtured the idea of a school family where members care for and are mutually responsible for one another. The key objective of pastoral care is to foster each student's sense of wellbeing and to nourish his or her self-esteem as he or she develops emotionally, socially, intellectually and spiritually. People who know about themselves become confident, resilient contributors to society.

The Pastoral Care Network at Columba consists of an integrated team of people, including senior staff, the chaplain, guidance counsellors, an experienced clinical psychologist, deans and form teachers, who meet regularly to focus on student needs and develop programmes and events.

From the time students begin at Columba, great emphasis is placed on participation and interacting with others in a range of school activities as well as voluntary community initiatives. Through participation and engaging in teamwork and leadership opportunities students learn about themselves and others and become confident members of the school and wider community.





*Come and share  
your story.*

## Application Process

### 1.

We encourage you to visit our school by either attending an Open Day or contact us directly to arrange a personal tour.

### 2.

For those in our valued boarding communities of the wider Otago and Southland regions, our Principal and Director of Boarding conduct 'Country Visits' during the month of May.

### 3.

To complete the online application process please visit the admissions section of our website. You will need to upload and attach to the application the following:

- applicant's birth certificate
- copy of the applicants most recent school report
- a personal statement from parents/caregivers
- two written references; and
- a copy of immigration documentation (if relevant)

Our final application dates can be found on our website with Boarding applications normally closing in at the end of May/start of June and Day applications in August.

Please contact the school directly on **03 467 5288** or email [enrol@columbacollege.school.nz](mailto:enrol@columbacollege.school.nz) if you have any questions regarding enrolling at Columba College.

#### Meet Milla -

"My family moved to Dunedin in 2013 but in 2020 looked to move back North. I was having such a great time at Columba that I managed to convince our parents to stay. My father now commutes from Tauranga - sorry Dad!"





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*We wish to acknowledge the work and support of Columba parent and photographer, Angela Jane Photography in helping capture the story and spirit of Columba through her lens.*