

# Ad Astra

HOSTEL

REACH FOR THE STARS

## Parents & Boarders Manual

# 2025



# Home to exceptional girls' attending Whanganui Girls' College



## Welcome

Sending your daughter to Boarding School isn't an easy decision; it requires adjustment for you and your daughter. Boarding will be a challenging experience for your daughter as she leaves the familiarity of home and moves to a more communal style of living. It will not always be easy but the gains to be made are enormous.

Boarding provides a unique opportunity for your daughter to achieve her potential. She will be part of a close community which will help her to develop independence, self-confidence and tolerance for others.

While the academic life of Whanganui Girls' College is a key focus for your daughter, the boarding philosophy at 'Ad Astra' also strives to foster independence while responding to the individual needs, gifts and talents of each girl. Her time at Ad Astra will provide her with choices about how she spends her time and what activities she pursues so that she can determine her own experiences at school and grow as a person, not just academically. This process of growth in independence, meeting new people and pursuing her interests is often fun and very rewarding.

The primary concern of the staff is to provide your daughter with a safe and happy environment that represents, as closely as possible, a home environment. At the same time, living with a large group of girls is not the same as living with siblings. Boarding is a unique and unforgettable experience – overwhelmingly positive but not without its challenges.

When your daughter first arrives at Ad Astra as a boarding student, she will be entering a new phase of her life and initially she will be operating outside her comfort zone. She will need to deal with a new school, a new 'shared' home environment, new carers and she will inevitably experience concerns about establishing friendships. It is only natural that she will feel uncomfortable, but this feeling will pass. It takes different lengths of time for different girls. Even returning boarders need to go through a readjustment phase each time they return from a long break.

Life in Ad Astra Hostel complements the broad principles of Whanganui Girls' College where we aim to provide the best education possible for each girl so she reaches her potential and is prepared for the multitude of challenges and opportunities which life will present. Ad Astra Hostel life encourages high standards and provides a positive environment for academic studies. There are also varied opportunities to participate in sport and many other co-curricular activities.

The Ad Astra staff and current boarders look forward to welcoming the new boarders and their families into our community. We are confident you will find your association with Whanganui Girls' College and the Ad Astra Hostel a rewarding and enjoyable experience.



## Introduction

Ad Astra Hostel is owned and operated by Whanganui Girls' College Board of Trustees. Rochelle Howard is the on-site Hostel Manager.

Rochelle is excited to be a part of creating a home away from home family like environment, so the boarders feel safe, secure and cared for. The numbers are gradually growing in the hostel and school, which reflects the high-quality girls' only education of Whanganui Girls' College.

The original hostel built in 1892, was called Wickham House and was situated in Campbell Street many years ago. Ad Astra Hostel was built in 1976 and officially opened in February 1976.

Ad Astra Hostel offers care and accommodation for up to 80 girls. The communal nature of boarding life necessitates the establishment of certain rules and procedures to ensure the provision of the best care possible for the girls in our charge and the smooth operation of the household.

The overarching aim of the Hostel is to provide a secure and caring environment in which the girls will grow and develop academically, socially, physically and morally.

This is based on three important interrelated principles:

- Co-operation
- Responsible leadership and positive interactions with others
- Respect and acceptance of others' differences



Like any home, a sense of co-operation comes from shared aims, a concern for others and a sense of solidarity. This co-operation extends to areas such as assisting in running socials, taking part in Hostel events (Athletics etc.), duties, helping another boarder with homework and ensuring rooms are clean and tidy.

Rules will be part of life at any boarding house or hostel. Any community needs to establish common rules and expectations to achieve its collective aim. In the Ad Astra community, we attempt to keep the rules to a minimum. However, we are very conscious of our duty to care for the girls and have given careful consideration to the regulations and procedures which operate in the Hostel.

All rules are in place for a reason, and these are reviewed regularly to ensure the safety, well-being and happiness of each girl in our care. Whilst it is necessary to have common guidelines, we make every attempt to be flexible to accommodate the individuality of each girl. We aim to be fair, firm and consistent in addressing inappropriate behaviour.

Sometimes adolescents learn most when they make a mistake and are given a chance to learn from that. So "second" and even "third" chances are not uncommon. Just as at home, some actions will require a disciplinary response, and parents will be informed immediately of serious breaches of guidelines and may be involved in the process of deciding an appropriate consequence.

It is our experience that, once the girls are used to the way in which the Hostel functions, adherence to the guidelines are not generally a problem.

As a member of the boarding community, each student is expected to adhere to high standards of behaviour which reflect responsibility to and care for others, oneself and the environment.

A major aim of Ad Astra is to produce successful, independent and responsible young people who are equipped to enter the next stage of their lives. To achieve this aim there will be an emphasis on the boarders gradually accepting responsibility as they progress in the Hostel and assume informal and formal leadership positions.

In the boarding community there will be a wide variety of people of varying backgrounds, personalities and values. To ensure a harmonious, happy and successful community each Boarder will need to be tolerant of others. Girls are encouraged to treat everybody with respect. Unacceptable behaviour such as teasing, bullying or any form of discrimination will not be tolerated.

Respect should be shown to all persons and property. Any damage resulting from deliberate or thoughtless actions will incur a damage fee. Clear consequences for students who do not adhere to the code of behaviour are listed around hostel.

The healthy development of your daughter will proceed most successfully when we work as a true partnership in her best interests. This requires close communication and frequent contact. It is important that you contact the Hostel Manager, Rochelle Howard at any time if you have concerns of any nature in relation to the happiness of your daughter(s).



### **Ad Astra Hostel - Contact Numbers**

Ad Astra telephone	(06) 343 2964
Hostel Managers - Rochelle Howard	022 184 8864
Email	hostel@wgc.ac.nz
Web page:	<a href="http://www.wgc.ac.nz">www.wgc.ac.nz</a>

#### **Hostel Postal Address**

Ad Astra Hostel  
119 Anzac Parade  
Wanganui East  
Wanganui 4500

#### **Whanganui Girls' College**

Telephone (06) 3490944  
Absentee line (06) 3490944, press 1  
For dean information refer to: [www.wgc.ac.nz](http://www.wgc.ac.nz)

## Ad Astra Hostel

The Hostel is composed of five sections, all linked by connecting walkways.

- Whare Noho (House of Women) or main building houses the office, visitors' lounge, computer area, kitchen, dining area, linked to an outside garden area. The Managers' flat is located in this area also.
- Page House consists of mostly twin share bedrooms with an extension incorporating single room accommodation. Page Dorm accommodates the junior girls (Years 9 & 10).
- Baker & Tizard Dorms consists of mostly twin share bedrooms.
- Fraser House consists of single bedrooms also with an extension incorporating single room accommodation. Fraser accommodates our senior girls (Years 12 through 13).

Boarders also have access (by arrangement) to the Whanganui Girls' College library, gymnasium, fitness centre, swimming pool and other school facilities after school hours.

The Ad Astra Hostel offers support for girls to pursue their personal interests and organise many interesting activities throughout the year. Girls are encouraged and supported in extending themselves academically, culturally and physically.



## Term Dates 2025

Ad Astra Hostel open and closed 2025

### **Term 1**

Hostel open –

Exeat weekend – TBA

Term 1 ends - 11 April 5:15pm (Includes Easter)

### **Term 2**

Hostel opens – Sunday 27 April from 2pm

Exeat weekend – Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May 5:15pm to Monday 2 June 4pm (Kings Birthday)

Term 2 ends – Friday 27 June 5:15pm

### **Term 3**

Hostel opens – Sunday 13 July from 2pm

Exeat Weekend – 21<sup>st</sup> August – Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> August (teachers only day)

Term 3 ends – Friday 19 September 5:15pm

### **Term 4**

Hostel opens – Sunday 5 October from 2pm

Exeat Weekend – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November - Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November 4pm (teachers only day)

Term 4 ends – Friday 5th December 12pm



## Role of Staff

*All staff - strive to develop a Hostel spirit and character which is friendly, supportive and recognises the worth of each person as an individual, creating a sense of belonging in all members of the Hostel.*

### Hostel Manager

The Manager has overall responsibility for the co-ordination of all Ad Astra matters and the leadership of all staff. This includes:

- The care and guidance of boarders including discipline. The overarching aim is to create a nurturing and supportive environment for all boarding students.
- Liaising with boarders' school and parents to ensure the best care for each boarder in relation to her medical, social, emotional and physical well-being.

Hostel Manager: Rochelle Howard 022 184 8864

### Hostel Facilities Assistant - Supervisors

The Supervisor is responsible for:

- Day to day management of the girls and the daily supervision of the girls.
- The welfare of the students, on a day-to-day basis.
- Are responsible for the general care, guidance and discipline of all the boarders and the general running of their boarding area while on duty.
- Ensure security checks occur.
- In the absence of the Hostel Manager, she communicates directly with parents regarding domestic and leave arrangements and any matters relating to the boarding aspect of the girls' school lives.



### Hauora / Health and Wellbeing

A Health Nurse is available through Whanganui Girls' College. We use the Accident and Medical after hour's service at the Whanganui Hospital (charges apply – WHAM)

Additionally, parents are to complete the medical forms as well as the permission to administer medications before your daughter arrives at Ad Astra. All prescription medication is administered under the care of the appointed supervising staff. Students are not allowed to have any tablets, capsules or mixtures in the Hostel unless the doctor has recommended that they be kept at hand. The Hostel staff must be made aware of this, and the hostel Manager has agreed to them self-medicating and arranged an action plan. Asthmatic relief sprays, for instance, come into this category.

Parents or girls should, upon arrival, hand in all prescription medication with written information to the Hostel Manager to any major medical conditions. It is imperative that action plans are provided for ongoing medical conditions that require medications not normally dispensed.

Boarders are to place all medication with the supervisor on duty unless arranged otherwise. The staff attend to the medical needs of the girls and are able to provide home nursing first aid during the day. A small First Aid Cabinet is in the Hostel office for Panadol, antiseptics, Band-Aids, etc. The Hostel covers the cost of all minor first aid needs. Personal medication or other special personal supplies not supplied by the Hostel will be charged to your account.

The hostel manager is available at 7am each school morning to assess boarders who are unwell or need to have an appointment made for them.

A staff member is available after hours if girls require medical help during the night. If your daughter is unable to attend school due to illness or injury, and the recovery period is up to 2 days, she may stay in the Hostel under the care of the Hostel Health Officer. Should the illness exceed 2 days, or the illness is highly contagious, parents will be contacted to arrange for their daughter to return home or to another appropriate location to recuperate. In such circumstances parents will be contacted by the Hostel Manager or Supervisor



In some instances, girls who are in a share room and who have been ill during the day may be required to sleep in a single room overnight to reduce the risk of infecting or disturbing others.

A staff member is on duty each night. All senior staff have a Certificate in First Aid.

***Whanganui Girls' College and Ad Astra Hostel follow the same core values***

## **ASTRA**

- A – Achieve** Each student should work to reach their potential.
- S – Safe** Students should work together to ensure learning happens in a safe and understanding environment.
- T – Tipuranga** Growth happens in academic, cultural, sporting and emotional spheres
- R – Respect** A culture of mutual respect is a pre-requisite to achieving successful outcomes.
- A – Awhi** Supporting peers is key to ensuring a strong culture within our school.

The School and Hostel also use **Restorative Practice** as a relational approach to managing school and hostel life grounded in beliefs about equality, dignity, mana and the potential of all people.

## Routines and Expectations

### General Behaviour

Students are encouraged to become responsible members of the boarding community, showing consideration for others and doing all in their power to help the hostel run harmoniously.

Rules will be kept to a minimum and these will be founded upon the expectation of responsible behaviour by all members of the Hostel. Students are expected to treat each other and staff as they would like to be treated. Normal good manners are expected: "please" and "thank you" are expected. Bad language is not acceptable and a constructive attitude towards the rules and routines is expected. Truthfulness and honesty are highly respected qualities.

### Expectations

Girls are expected to tidy their rooms each day before school and before dinner on Sunday evening.

Girls are expected to:

- Make their bed each day
- Draw curtains, switch off electrical appliances, lights etc.
- Hang clothes in wardrobes
- Hang towels
- Put dirty laundry in their laundry bag / basket, and wash and dry their laundry regularly.
- Tidy the desk top
- Clear the floor of objects and vacuum.
- Change linen each laundry day and take dirty linen to the laundry for washing and drying
- Carry out rostered duties for vacuuming, recycling, rubbish and kitchen

Ad Astra Hostel endeavours to provide a safe and supportive environment but from time-to-time boarders may choose to engage in behaviours which are not beneficial to all who reside in the hostel. Hostel has a list of misdemeanours and consequences should the actions require.

Students are asked to use appropriate language. Swearing lowers the tone of the Hostel and is offensive to many people.

The list below are considered serious breaches:

- The use of drugs / Alcohol / smoking / vaping and the inappropriate or possession of prohibited substances.
- Sneaking out at night, or leaving the hostel grounds
- Wilful damage to property
- Bullying
- Fighting
- Inappropriate use of computers / phones
- Disruption, disrespect and not engaging at prep
- Hair dying (prohibited at hostel)
- Disrespect to staff

*The above is considered serious breaches of our trust and warrant serious consequences.*



## Damage to Hostel Property

Damage incurred by girls where undue care or irresponsible behaviour is involved will result in an appropriate repair charge being added to their Hostel account for payment by you. This includes being responsible for a false fire service call-out. An alarm service cost of \$300 will be charged to your account in this instance.

## Computers / Wi-Fi

The Hostel has a number of computers, which are linked to the Whanganui Girls' College computer network. They also have access to the internet. This provides boarders with access to E-mail, MSN, Facebook etc.



These computers are designed primarily for educational purposes and should be used in accordance with the School's Computer Use Policy which all boarders sign.

Personal laptops may be brought to the Hostel and Whanganui Girls' College; however, the hostel is not responsible for any damage or loss incurred. The laptop must have an effective virus scanner installed. Girls will be given password access to the Hostel internet system.

The Hostel has high-speed wireless and fixed access internet connections, so girls are able to access the internet and intranet from most areas of the Hostel including the central courtyard area.

The school's Computer Use Policy applies to boarders at all times. Social networking sites and internet are shut down at various times to encourage a healthy routine for study and sleep.

## Meals

- Unless engaged in school or sporting commitments or on leave, all boarders are expected to come to the dining room for the morning and evening meals.
- Boarders must arrive at dinner promptly and be seated before the meal is served.
- Hostel provides a nutritious and varied menu, and all efforts are made to accommodate specific dietary requirements (Vegetarian & Gluten Free food is provided).

### Breakfast

A range of cereals, toast and fruit are available and usually baked beans and spaghetti. On weekends, eggs are offered as well.

### Morning Tea

Home baking is provided. In addition, fruit is always available to take to school.

### Lunch

The school is now part of the Ko ora Ka free and healthy school lunches programme



### Afternoon Tea

Fruit is always available for an after-school snack and cakes, biscuits, etc. are provided by the kitchen staff.

### Dinner

Dinner consists of a main course and dessert 3-4 times a week (students have some opportunity to suggest menu items).

### Supper

A light snack is provided along with hot chocolate.

### Dress and Clothing

#### For Meals

Meals are eaten in the dining room. Dress for the evening meal is informal and neat casual clothes. Occasionally there are special functions; these tend to be either semi-formal or themed dress up.

#### For Leave

Smart casual dress is required. Girls must not go to local shops or the city in sports uniform. If girls leave the Hostel in school uniform, it must be full uniform.

### Electrical Appliances

Girls may bring with them a clock, speaker, hair dryer/straightener, and lap top, provided they are not used too loudly or at inappropriate times. However, for safety reasons, electric blankets, radiators, personal electric fans and kettles are not permitted. Electrical goods, cameras, watches etc. should be engraved with your daughter's name.

All electrical appliances that are brought into Ad Astra Hostel must be safety checked and date tagged. *Please note:*

*candles must not be used in the Boarding House*

***Hostel has no responsibility for loss or damage***



### Laundry

Each girl is required to have a personal laundry bag or basket. Some laundry baskets are provided in the laundry. All clothes need to be marked with the girl's name. Girls are responsible for their own laundry and are encouraged to hang clothes onto the lines rather than use the driers when the weather is fine as a matter of respect for energy consumption and the environment. Please note our machines are top loaders and appropriate powder should be used.

Towels and sheets must be changed once a week on the particular laundry day for the dorm, and taken into the laundry. They will be available for collection after school.

### Pocket Money

The most convenient way to manage spending money is to open an eft-pos card account and put money into it as required. Hostel takes no responsibility for loss of cash. Girls should not share their card details and must keep it safe.

## Visitors

Parents may visit at any convenient time and similar policies apply for visits by grandparents and other relatives. All visitors are asked to check-in with the staff member on duty upon arrival as a security precaution. PLEASE DO NOT GO INTO THE DORMS WITHOUT CHECKING IN WITH A STAFF MEMBER.

Male visitors are not permitted into the dormitories and are restricted to the lounge, dining and outside BBQ areas.

**Under the vulnerable children's act we are responsible for safety, therefore visitors will be**

- People listed on the boarders enrolment, or logged in Orah
- People nominated by caregivers, who have been advised to the Hostel Manager in advance

## School Day Programme

### Mornings 7am to 8.35am

- All boarders are responsible for getting themselves up, tidying their rooms, having breakfast and preparing for school.
- They may go for runs and sports practices etc. early, however, no one is allowed to leave the hostel grounds before 6.30am and they must checkout with the staff member on duty.
- A staff member is on Active Duty from 6.30am. This person opens the gates, and does a wake-up walk through the hostel at 7am and supervises breakfast. It is not always possible for this person to be near or to hear the phone, so this may not be a good time to contact the office.
- All girls are to have left the hostel by 8.35am for school.
- Breakfast -Weekdays 7.15am – 8am
- Breakfast -Weekends 8.30am – 10am

### Evening Programme Weekdays

#### 3.10pm to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday

- Arrive home from school, afternoon tea available.
- Sport practices, housekeeping, exercise, free time, showers.
- Girls may go to the local shops if they have approval.

#### 5.15pm to 6.00pm

- Dinner

#### 6pm to 7pm

- Prep

#### 7.45pm to 8.15pm

- Supper

Wanganui Girls' College AD ASTRA HOSTEL HEAD GIRLS			
1974 Shona Lee Vicki Thomas	1982 Fraser : Tizard : Baker : Page :	1990 Lynette Worsfold (Term I & III) Janis Hoggie (Term III) Diana McNaught Sheryl Aisoon Donna Scarrow (Term I) Francis Aiken (Term II & III)	2004 Lucy Donovan
1975 Reta Bates	1983 Desirée Baird	1991 Pip McKinnon	2005 Victoria Fraser
1976 Lynley Sommerville Suzanne Bush	1984 Angela Simpson	1992 Sonia Whiteman	2006 Helen Purness
1977 Tracy Nation	1985 Tracy B. Hill	1993 Bronwyn Hallane	2007 Danni Seaur
1978 Debra Simes	1986 Debra McNeill	1994 Kirsten Barclatt	2008 Kiera Heavys
1979 Fraser : Tizard : Baker : Page :	1987 Sonia Philip	1995 Emily Bird	
1980 Fraser : Tizard : Baker : Page :	1988 Lynette Rutherford	1996 Heidi Smith	
1981 Fraser : Tizard : Baker : Page :	1989 Christine Aiken		
1982 Fraser : Tizard : Baker : Page :	1990 Fiona Bright		
1983 Desirée Baird	1991 Pip McKinnon		
1984 Angela Simpson	1992 Sonia Whiteman		
1985 Tracy B. Hill	1993 Bronwyn Hallane		
1986 Debra McNeill	1994 Kirsten Barclatt		
1987 Sonia Philip	1995 Emily Bird		
1988 Lynette Rutherford	1996 Heidi Smith		
1989 Christine Aiken			
1990 Fiona Bright			
1991 Pip McKinnon			
1992 Sonia Whiteman			
1993 Bronwyn Hallane			
1994 Kirsten Barclatt			
1995 Emily Bird			
1996 Heidi Smith			
1997 Rebecca Summerhays			
1998 Katherine Fouhy			
1999 Rochelle Harden			
2000 Amy Hughes			
2001 Rebecca White			
2002 Fleur McDonald			
2003 Kelly Johnston			
2004 Kate Matthews			
2005 Alessia Emis			
2006 Donna Ward			
2007 Helen Purness			
2008 Danni Seaur			
2009 Victoria Fraser			
2010 Rebekah Stout			
2011 Harriet Fraser			
2012 Potazee Thoms			
2013 Belinda Chand			
2014 Sophie Lee			
2015 Erin Byrne			
2016 Jodie Lee			
2017 Toni-Anne Robinson			
2018 Melissa Jackson			
2019 Unesi Bulutolu			
2020 Georgia Rata			
2021 Tami-Lee Taylor			
2022 Kiera Heavys			

## Phone & Device collection & bed times

### YEAR 9

Phones	8.45pm
In bed / lights out	9pm
Quiet	9.15pm

### YEAR10

Phones	9pm
In bed / lights out	9.15pm
Quiet	9.30pm

### YEAR 11

Phones	9.30pm
In bed / lights out	9.45pm
Quiet	10pm

### YEAR 12

Phones	9.45pm
In bed / lights out	10pm
Quiet	10.15pm



**WEEKENDS** In own rooms, lights out, quiet by 10.00pm

**WEEKDAYS** Dorms and boarders need to be quiet from 9.00pm.

It is expected that the Dormitory areas are quiet after 9.00pm each evening including weekends so girls may study or go to bed early. Gatherings on the weekends should be in communal areas, not in bedrooms. This is to ensure a reasonable balance between opportunities for relaxation and the need to establish quiet places for people to study and rest.

### Saturday / Sunday

8.00 am	Gates opened
8.30-10.00am	Breakfast and preparation for sport commitments
12.00pm	Lunch
5.00pm	Dinner
8.00pm	Supper
9.00pm	Hostel locked

## Homework / Prep

Prep scheduled from 6pm to 7pm Monday to Thursday and Sunday evening. Year 13's may study in their own room.

Prep time is supervised by a staff member and a quiet working environment is expected. Help may be sought from the staff on duty. At times it may be necessary for girls to work together during prep time. This may be negotiated with the staff.





Limited use of a personal Laptop, iPad or similar device is permitted to assist with homework. Use of this is at the supervisor table (junior prep) where access to various sites can be monitored. Any access to social media sites will result in confiscation of the device(s).

During study time there should be no recreational TV, telephone calls, social media or visitors. Music is allowed with headphone on the condition that the boarder is not disruptive to others.

## Contact

### Telephone Times

It's best to contact boarders on their own phone, otherwise you can ring the supervisor's during these times:

#### **Weekdays:**

Monday – Friday            3.30pm – 5.00pm and 7.30pm – 9.00pm

Dinner is at 5.15 – 6.00pm so the phones will not always be attended to take calls at this time.

#### **Weekends:**

Anytime **except** during mealtimes which are:

Lunch                      12 noon to 12.30pm

Dinner                     5.00pm – 5.30pm

## Mobile Phones

Ad Astra Hostel has adopted a mobile phone policy and as part of that policy mobile phones are permitted in the Hostel. While we recognise mobile phones can improve the communication between you and your daughter, they could also increase and intensify the feeling of homesickness, particularly for younger girls.

### Conditions of Use

- Boarders bring mobile phones to the Hostel at their own risk. The Hostel accepts no liability in the event of loss or damage to the mobile phone. Parents should organise their own insurance policy.
- Girls must give their mobile number to the Hostel Manager.
- Mobile phones must at all times be used discreetly and should not impose on other boarders.
- Parents are requested to advise their daughters to consider others when using the phone. Mobile phones must be switched off during all communal activities: e.g. meals, study periods and after lights out. Years 9 to 11 must hand all phones in to the overnight supervisor at bed time. They will be handed back at breakfast time.
- Mobile phones should not be loaned to or be used by other students.



*Inappropriate use of a mobile phone will result in the withdrawal of permission to use the mobile phone. It will be sent home for parents to hand back at an appropriate time. The support of parents in enforcing requirements is essential.*

*Repeated breaches will result in the student not having permission to have a mobile phone at Hostel.*

## Homesickness

It is perfectly normal for a student living in completely new surroundings, and in a communal environment, to feel strange and miss home and her family. Staff and senior students work actively to support well-being.

We think it is important for students to realise that they are likely to feel homesick from time to time, that it is quite normal and something they should acknowledge and seek help for.

It is important for parents to emphasise the benefits of involvement in and out of the classroom. Involvement in sport, music, drama and other activities is very beneficial and should be encouraged wherever possible. It also serves as a distraction from feelings of homesickness.



In the early stages, while it is comforting to you as a parent to touch base with your daughter often, the contact with home can often accentuate feelings of homesickness. Often a student who is apparently coping quite well will suffer a set-back after ringing home. Always try to end phone calls on a positive note. It is important for you to realise that you will hear of, or experience, the worst of your daughter's homesickness. She will tend to contact you when she is feeling at her lowest. She may focus on the negative aspects. Try to encourage her to think positively.

Poor grades and difficulty with work can be symptoms of homesickness in the early stages. Contacting the Hostel Manager & the School Dean is recommended if you believe her academic development is being compromised. The Hostel Manager will work closely with you and your daughter's teachers to assist her through this. A recurrence of the problem is quite common after Exeat weekends or after term holidays. However, usually this is overcome very quickly on returning to school.



Please encourage your daughter to see the Hostel Manager or a member of the staff if she is unhappy. It is our aim to help you and your daughter cope positively with the settling in period. Understanding, patience and firmness make for a quick and relatively smooth adjustment to the new environment. Above all please do not hesitate to contact the Hostel Manager if you wish to discuss any problems your daughter may face once she has joined our community.



## Religious Practice / Entertainment / Employment / Sport / Cultural

### Religious Practice

We are supportive of every student's spirituality and any student who wishes to practice their faith on a regular basis is encouraged to do so. Please discuss your wishes in regard to this matter with the Hostel Manager. The boarders may attend church or youth services.

### Bikes / Cars

At Ad Astra we try to make boarding as similar to a home environment as possible and consequently bikes are permitted. However, Ad Astra is surrounded by busy roads and in order to ensure the safety of all girls the following conditions apply. Parents should arrange their own insurance, as the hostel does not carry insurance on students' personal property.

#### **Conditions of use**

- Girls must wear a helmet and obey all road rules.
- Outside of the Hostel grounds they should, whenever possible, only use bike lanes or paths.
- Bikes should only be used at night with permission from staff. Such permission would be given only in very special circumstances.
- Bikes should not be used by other students without permission.

Year 13 Boarders may have access to cars for travelling to and from the Hostel at the beginning and end of term for Exeats' and for work experience. However, they may not transport any other boarders or day girls in those cars without both the Hostel Manager's permission and the permission of all passenger's parents if the driver is on a full licence.

Year 13 students can apply in writing to the Hostel Manager to have access to a private vehicle. Each case will be assessed.



#### **Conditions of use**

- Keys must be left at the Hostel office when the car is not in use.
- Cars must be stored on the Hostel grounds.
- Girls may not travel with other students until the appropriate Hostel forms have been completed. These forms require the signature of all girls' parents, passengers and drivers.
- Travelling to and from parties by private car is not permitted unless a parent or other designated responsible adult is driving. These arrangements must be cleared before the outing.

*A breach of any of the above conditions will result in the withdrawal of permission to use the bike or car for at least one week. Repeated breaches will result in losing all these privileges.*

## Leave and Visitors

Communication is vital in all leave arrangements.

### Leave Policy

- Boarders may be granted leave from the Hostel, provided it does not impose upon their academic and sporting commitments.
- Leave should be arranged to avoid conflict with the normal daily routine of the Hostel. Girls planning leave on Saturday must consider sporting commitments.
- When a student is invited to visit friends or relatives of a family not on the host list, it is parent's responsibility to ensure the host or the girl's parents are contacted to confirm all the proposed arrangements. All details should be recorded on Orah or given to the Hostel Manager. Parents will also need to approve the leave.
- All girls leaving the Hostel at any time must record their movements on the Orah application.
- Overnight leave and weekend day leave must be applied for using the Orah application and must be pre-approved by the Hostel Manager.
- Parents have responsibility for knowing who their daughters are spending recreational time with, especially when they may be at the homes of others.
- The Hostel does not undertake Police checks on host families. The Hostel requires your consent for overnight leave.
- The Hostel manager reserved the right to decline overnight stays if there is any concern around safety.

The principle behind the Orah application for approval of leave is to ensure parents have given informed consent.

#### Procedure:

- Each girl must notify the Hostel Managers office of any planned weekend outing on or before Wednesday 8.30pm.
- It is important for security reasons that the person collecting your daughter is sighted by a member of staff.
- Girls should be collected and returned to the hostel by an adult.
- Short term leave during the week is approved on a daily basis.
- Weekend leave will be reviewed and approved by the Hostel Manager.

In all cases leave must be approved by a manager or Supervisor. In a family environment it is an expected courtesy for children to communicate their plans. This is even more important in a boarding environment for safety reasons.

- Junior boarders need to arrange leave in groups of 2 or more, not by themselves, unless approved by supervising staff on behalf of parents.
- Where possible, leave should not cut across mealtimes or prep times. Ideally if taking leave after school. Monday – Friday, girls should not return after 5:00pm and not after 4.00pm on Saturday and Sunday
- Day visits to town will not be approved for girls who have not complied with Hostel routines.

As not every leave possibility can be described in this booklet, other leave arrangements may be permitted at the discretion of the Hostel Manager upon consultation with parents where possible. Sometimes leave will be restricted or denied if a student has behaved inappropriately. The leave system alerts staff when a student is overdue. Parents and boarders need to remember to communicate with the hostel management their plans to avoid disappointment.

### **Departure from and return to the Hostel**

- Girls are expected to sign out and in with a staff member.
- Visitors are to be introduced to staff before proceeding to move into the Hostel.
- Staff will decide whether it is appropriate for visitors to be in the Dorms.
- Girls are not permitted to answer the front door after it has been locked. Sometimes it is very busy and staff may be on the phone so there may be a short delay in responding to the doorbell.
- On the weekends we request that boarders are back on site by 5pm on Sunday evening, if they will be later than this, please ensure you have communicated this with the supervisor on duty.

### **Travel in Private Cars**

Parents are asked to provide specific documentation if they do not agree to allow their daughter to be driven by Hostel staff or school staff, and school parents for sporting or other school activities. This includes coaches employed by the school. If no written request is received disallowing this, it is assumed that parents have consented

### **Outings during the week**

Girls may go to the local shops or the city during the week and club sport matches, but shopping visits should be minimised.

### **Exeat / End of Term**

#### **Exeat**

These are compulsory weekends on which all students leave the Hostel to go home or stay with friends. They provide an important break from the regimen of boarding life. Generally, boarders are expected to leave by 5.15pm on the final day of school preceding the Exeat weekend and return after 4.00pm on the day they are due back.

Details of leave and travel arrangements should be finalised by Wednesday evening prior to the Exeat, earlier if possible. Parents will be informed of details of the Exeat leave for confirmation of the details. While missing school days before and after Exeat weekends is not encouraged, the Day school and Hostel acknowledge the difficulties experienced if travelling long distances.

Any anticipated early departures must be negotiated through the School Dean and the Hostel should then be informed of the details.

No evening meal is provided on the night of an Exeat start.

#### **Early return from Exeat**

Please do not return girls early from Exeat. The Hostel is open from 4:00pm to receive students. If you have a difficulty with this, please contact Rochelle to make special arrangements.

Difficulty regarding returning from an Exeat may be telephoned to the office after 3.30pm on the return day.

### **Beginning of the Year**

New boarders arrive at the Hostel by 12pm one day prior to the commencement of school for an orientation programme. Returning Boarders should aim to arrive by 2pm one day prior to the commencement of school. All boarders should be checked in by 7.00pm at the latest. If there are any difficulties with transport times, please notify the Hostel Office on (06) 343 2964.

### Returning to the Boarding House at the beginning of each Term

The Hostel is open from 2.00pm to receive boarders. All boarders are to be in by 7.00pm on this day. If there are problems with transport, please advise the Hostel Office on (06) 343 2964. Boarders may go out with family during the day once they have checked in but must return by 8.00pm.



### Packing for the End of the Term / Year

This is done progressively over the last week of term. Boarders who need to travel a long way may leave some of their belongings in sealed and labelled boxes or bags over the breaks. Boarders will be provided with final arrangements for leaving the Hostel during Term 4 to accommodate the boarder's attendance at the official functions that mark the close of the school.

**The Hostel takes no responsibility for items left on the premises.**

### Departure at the End of Term

Generally, boarders are expected to organise their travel arrangements so that they do not miss any school time. The school realises that this is not always possible. If missing school is unavoidable, permission to be absent may be requested from the principal.

On the last day of school terms all boarders are to vacate the premises by 5.15pm



### Security

Camera Surveillance - the perimeter of the Hostel has recording camera surveillance.

## Policy and Procedures

All policies and procedures, are now available to our school and boarding community on SchoolDocs.

SchoolDocs provides us with a comprehensive core set of policies, which have been well researched and align with the National Education and Learning Priorities. The policies and procedures are tailored to our school, Hostel, and the supplies specific information such as our charter, and procedures for behaviour management, reporting to parents, etc.

SchoolDocs updates, modifies, or creates policies in response to changes in legislation or Ministry guidelines, significant events, reviews/requests from schools, and regular reviewing from the SchoolDocs team. Our school board has the opportunity to view changes/additions and comment on them before they are implemented. We will advise you when policies are up for review and how you can take part in the review.

Many of the boarding policies align and fall under the school's policies and we are continuing to update and review all these to ensure safe practices.

All documents can be viewed by following the link at <https://whanganuigirlscollege.schooldocs.co.nz>. Our username is "wgc" and password "astra".

Once on the site you can view the Boarding Hostel Policies tab on the left-hand side. Then follow the link in yellow. See [Self-Review and Board Assurances](#).

If you have questions about these policies or procedures, please do not hesitate to contact the Hostel Manager.

## Complaints procedure

### Purpose

Align with the Whanganui Girls College Complaints Policy 6.1

To ensure compliance of license and constant improvement of operations for clients and staff.

### Policy

Ad Astra Hostel aims to maintain a culture of constant and never-ending improvement; we thus take complaints as a notice that an area of operations requires improvement. Complaints are accepted from students, staff, parents and clients.

### Procedure

**At any time during this process the school complaints procedure can be applied**

As per the Hostel regulations this process can also be followed.

Complaints can be made verbally or in writing to the Manager of Ad Astra.

#### Within 5 working days:

The manager will

- Send an acknowledgement letter of receipt to the complainant
- Inform the complainant of any relevant internal complaint procedures

#### 2. Within 10 working days after acknowledging receipt of the complaint:

The manager will

- Decide whether the complaint is or is not justified and advise if additional time is required to investigate the complaint and advise the complainant.

#### 3. After making a decision:

The manager will communicate with the complainant

- The reasons for the decision that the complaint is or is not justified; and
- Any actions proposed to take; and
- Any procedure in place to enable consideration of an appeal by the complainant against the manager's decision on the complaint; and
- The role of any relevant external agency that may be available to assist the complainant or to investigate the complaint if it is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction

## Forms

In order to have the information we need to care for your daughter and to always ensure her welfare, there are several forms which must be completed.

When entering the Hostel for the first time the following forms must be completed.

- Medical Record Sheet
- Personal Data Form
- Driver Permission Form
- Leave Permissions Form



Information should also be updated on a regular basis by current families.

### Insurance

Some insurance policies cover contents anywhere in New Zealand. You may wish to review your insurance policy to establish if your company covers personal contents in the Hostel, as the Hostel or its Insurers do not cover the individual girl's personal belongings.

### Hostel Fees

Hostel fees are reviewed each year and parents/caregivers notified by October what the next year's fees will be. Fees are set for a full school year but you may choose to pay on a term-by-term basis in advance. As term lengths are not all the same, this payment arrangement is to help you spread the payment load and any adjustments for early withdrawal from hostel will be worked out by the Hostel Management.

There are some guidelines and penalty fees for early withdrawal.

- All fee payments are to be in advance of the school term starting.
- One terms notice in writing for terms 1-3 or forfeiture of the term's fees
- Withdrawal for term 4, remainder of year's fees are payable in full.
- Girls not coming back the following year (excluding outgoing year 13's) notification must be given in writing four weeks before school starts or forfeiture of the first terms fees.

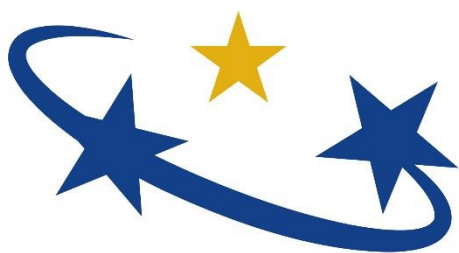
The annual cost of boarding at Ad Astra Hostel for 2026 are as follows:

7 days	\$ 13,000.00
5 days	\$ 9,700.00

### Boarding allowances

<https://parents.education.govt.nz/secondary-school/your-child-at-school/boarding-allowances/>





**Ad Astra**  
HOSTEL  
REACH FOR THE STARS

## What to bring?

In addition to casual clothing and personal toiletries, students require:

- Bath towels x 2 and face cloth
- Pillow & Pillowslip
- Own sheets and duvet – we can provide but find most girls prefer their own
- Laundry bag / basket
- Dressing Gown & Slippers
- Washing powder for top loader machine – low suds
- Sporting equipment if involved in recreational activities
- Beach towel & Swimwear
- Coat hangers
- Posters and photos for their room's wall
- Blu-tac
- Personal trinkets
- Clock/hair dryer/camera (optional) Must have been safety tagged
- Padlock
- Mattress protector

## What Not to Bring

- No aerosols – these set off the fire alarms and that incurs a \$300.00 + gst charge to you.
- No candles - these set off the fire alarms and that incurs a \$300.00 + gst charge to you.

***Please note that all uniforms and personal belongings should be labelled.***