

Nelson English Centre

Detailed School and Academic profile for agents 2009

Introduction: Learning English is an adventure.

Nelson English Centre is a unique school with an established reputation in one of the most beautiful areas of New Zealand – Nelson. The school is a place for students to learn and develop as people, make friends and find a new voice in English.

Nelson English Centre has high academic standards and excellent study support. Our students say that the school is well organised, staff are helpful and that they have the ‘time of their lives’ here. We believe that studying English is a life experience. With the right atmosphere and good solid teaching, learning English and making friends becomes an adventure.

Our promise

- A caring, trusting environment to learn in
- Excellent academic leadership
- Qualified, specialist teachers
- Study pathways / partnership with Lincoln University and Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT)
- Top activities programme including
 - regular trips to the world famous Abel Tasman National Park
 - free salsa lessons in our own dance and yoga studio
- Great personal service
- Carefully selected homestay families, managed by a full time homestay officer
- A philosophy of listening to, helping and respecting our students.

Study Partnership with NMIT (Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology)

In March 2009 Nelson English Centre concluded a further study partnership with Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology. This means that students can study English and continue on to study business, tourism, wine making and other degree and diploma courses in Nelson. We offer a one-stop-shop for students who already know

which course they want to do, or can assist with counselling if students need assistance deciding which course to do.

Director beliefs and operating philosophy

Over the last 25 years I have worked in many areas of teaching English as a foreign language – administration, academic and participation in industry associations. For twenty years my continued question has been: ‘What is the best place and way for students to learn English?’

My experience suggests that the best place for students to learn English is at a locally owned school with owners who are teaching professionals.

Nelson English Centre was founded on five beliefs

1. New Zealand ownership by teaching professionals
2. Studying English is a life experience. A school should do more than just teach English well; it can help our visitors have a memorable experience – sometimes life-changing.
3. Local character. We are proud of the Nelson location and proud of the different experience it gives our students.
4. Keeping up-to-date with international TEFL trends
5. Customer service and respect for learners

New Zealand ownership by teaching professionals

Does this make a difference? Can a school owned in London or Tokyo deliver good, personal service? I think it is possible, but very difficult. In my opinion, if the school owners are also teaching professionals with international experience and reputation, students can enjoy both personal service and international standards of teaching. The best locally owned schools world wide are well-known for clear, strong and long –term academic leadership.

Nelson English Centre has had the same ownership and management for fourteen years under the Upton family.

Studying English should be a life experience

Our approach is to create the feeling of a study club of students who are all serious about learning English. Students need to trust other students and staff, and have the space to develop confidence. Ideally they get a

sense of adventure about English and New Zealand life. This attitude does not develop by chance, but needs careful behind the scenes planning by the school

Some of the ways we achieve this in Nelson English Centre include:

- Staff carefully welcome students, know their names and show respect for them as adults
- We listen carefully to student and agent feedback.
- A unique and varied activity programme
- Carefully selecting the right homestay families to make students feel at home
- Time for fun and play as well as serious study time. The wonderful individual personalities of both students and teachers can shine in the school.
- When teachers are planning study programmes, they always consider students' own knowledge and experience.

Students often say in farewell speeches that they came to learn English, but ended up learning a lot more than that and having the time of their lives.

With the right atmosphere, learning English and making friends becomes an adventure. Students persist and succeed because they are highly motivated

Distinct local Nelson character ▲

Nelson is different and very exciting. It has a long educational history and strong tradition of proud independent thinking. Our school has spent years building up a close relationship with the people who live and work here. There are many 'friends of Nelson English Centre' around town who talk to and help students.

Since 1995, the creative, independent and non-conformist flavour of Nelson has quietly influenced Nelson English Centre and the students who come here. In small but important ways, Nelson English Centre reflects the special creative character of Nelson and its Golden Bay

culture.

Nelson is unique and students studying here will have an experience quite different from that of their friends studying in Vancouver, Auckland or Sydney. Young people are becoming increasingly sceptical about aspects of globalisation and the character of international corporations. Nelson English Centre is unashamedly a Nelson school, with Nelson character – and of course, Nelson ownership and control. We offer sophisticated modern students the very authentic local experience while at the same time keeping up with the best of global trends.

Keeping up-to-date with International ESOL trends

We have strong links with the UK, ENGLISH NEW ZEALAND and of course as members of IALC can access a worldwide network.

Customer service and respect for learners

All staff are chosen with this ethos in mind.

School history and academic leadership

Nelson English Centre is the only English school in New Zealand owned by a Cambridge CTEFLA trainer. We believe this strong academic leadership is a distinct advantage for our students.

The history of Nelson English Centre

1995	Nelson English Centre founded
1998	School accepted into ENGLISH NEW ZEALAND (FIELS)
2000	Nelson English Centre move into bigger premises near Nelson Cathedral and school roll stabilises at 40-70 in winter and 70-150 in summer
2003	School gains in popularity as Cambridge examination centre outside of Auckland and Christchurch
2003	Matriculation agreement with Lincoln University
2007	Strengthened community and local body relationships
2008	Accepted into IALC (International Association of Language Centres)
2009	Partnership and matriculation agreement with Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology concluded

Our teaching approach

Nelson English Centre has gained a reputation for consistent, effective teaching.

We aim for further advantage in key areas of:

- teacher selection and professional development
- matching the teaching team with our student body
- fully understanding and knowing students

Nelson English Centre uses an eclectic approach to teaching English. This includes insights and techniques from the communicative approach, lexical approach grammar translation, the direct method, community language learning and insights from linguistics and learning theories. We particularly follow developments in language teaching in the United Kingdom, and Australian developments.

We have also been influenced by a number of educational movements in New Zealand. These include the outdoor education movement in New Zealand and outward bound philosophy. Research by the educationalist Graeme Nuthall has also influenced our approach.
(www.nuthalltrust.org.nz)

We aim to have respect for the learner as intelligent adults who are motivated to learn, drawing on their own experiences including what is happening in the school. We are proud of how hard we try to give students ideas and opportunities to get to know and mix with each other and with the local community.

We aim for international best practice, strictly prepared lessons and language input, supported by fresh, lively, topical examples and links to the wider community.

The school has an active professional development programme and participates in both the ENGLISH NEW ZEALAND and IALC academic accreditation schemes.

James Upton

Director

February 2009

References

www.englishnewzealand.co.nz

www.ialc.org

www.nuthalltrust.org.nz

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