

Westlake Girls High School

Auckland, New Zealand



On the shores of Lake Pupuke in Takapuna, one of New Zealand's largest girls' schools builds its identity through a storied rowing programme dating to 1983.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	51/100
Academic outcomes	64/100
University placement	65/100
Prestige & heritage	49/100
Alumni network	1/100
Facilities	68/100
Transparency	59/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Westlake Girls High School occupies a strong position in Auckland’s state sector: a large, established girls’ day school in Takapuna with NCEA, a secular setting and the scale to offer breadth. It sits west of Lake Pupuke at 2 Wairau Road and serves girls aged 13 to 18. Founded in ****1957**** as a coeducational school and girls-only since ****1962****, it carries institutional weight without leaning on private-school mystique. With a roll of about ****2,289**** students, this is one of New Zealand’s largest single-sex schools. That scale matters. It supports a wide subject menu, extensive co-curricular activity and a student body

large enough that girls can find their academic level, social group and competitive lane without the school feeling niche or narrow.

What is special here is not boutique intimacy or pastoral hand-holding; it is range, tradition and female-only focus at serious scale. The school's own motto, "Virtute Experiamur | Let Courage Be Thy Test", signals a culture that values resolve and public contribution rather than soft branding. The editorial identity around its rowing programme, dating to 1983, adds a tangible point of distinction: this is a school with a *storied sporting tradition* tied to its lakeside setting, not a generic claim of "all-round excellence". Parents looking for a *high-capacity academic environment*, a *clear sense of heritage* and the social confidence that can come from an all-girls setting will find Westlake compelling. Parents looking for small classes, a village atmosphere or heavy curation of each pupil's path need to recognise that a school of this size runs on systems and momentum.

Westlake belongs on a shortlist for girls who want options, energy and a substantial peer group. It will suit students who are comfortable in a busy institution, ready to navigate a large campus community and keen to take advantage of the opportunities that scale creates in academics, sport and leadership. The best fit is a girl who thrives with independence, likes being surrounded by other ambitious students and wants a school with *real critical mass* rather than a sheltered enclave. For the right student, Westlake offers *earned confidence*, *competitive opportunity* and a recognisable place in Auckland's educational landscape.

STRENGTHS

- State-funded day school means no tuition fees, only a modest annual donation, unlike private alternatives in Auckland.
- Large roll (one of New Zealand's biggest girls' schools) supports a wide range of subject options and extracurricular clubs.
- Located in Takapuna on Auckland's North Shore, giving easy access to beaches and outdoor sport facilities used in PE and co-curricular programmes.
- Notable alumna includes musician Kimbra, reflecting a track record of producing students who go on to public recognition in the arts.
- Sits adjacent to Westlake Boys High School, allowing some shared co-curricular and social opportunities despite being single-sex.

TRADE-OFFS

- Single-sex environment will not suit families wanting co-education through to Year 13.
- NCEA is the only qualification offered, so families seeking IB or Cambridge pathways will need to look elsewhere.
- Very large student numbers can mean larger class sizes and less individualised pastoral attention than smaller schools.
- Out-of-zone places are limited and allocated by ballot, so families outside the zone face genuine uncertainty over admission.

ADMISSIONS

As a state school, in-zone students are entitled to enrolment on proof of residential address within the Westlake Girls zone. Out-of-zone applicants must apply for a limited number of places, allocated by ballot when demand exceeds availability, typically in the year before entry. There is no academic entrance examination. Families relocating to Auckland should confirm zone boundaries early, as North Shore zoning is tightly drawn and competitive given the school's reputation and location.

WTS RATING 

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