



Enrolment Policy

Related Policies

Pastoral Care Policy

Student Welfare and Management Policy

Exclusion Policy

PREAMBLE

At St Thomas the Apostle Primary School we adopt the Enrolment Policy mandated by the Catholic Education Office (CEO) and the Catholic Education Commission (CEC). The following policy addresses both Primary School and Secondary School enrolments in the Catholic Education School System.

The Catholic School has an ecclesial identity, because it is a part of the evangelising mission of the Church. Yet a distinguishing feature of Catholic education is that it is open to all, especially to the poor and weakest in society. It is vital that the school and parish cooperate, and that the school be integrated into the parish's pastoral programme, especially with regard to the Sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and Eucharist. (Ecclesia in Oceania, November 2001 No. 33)

Policy

1.0 PRINCIPLES

The Catholic Education Commission aims to provide the choice of Catholic schooling to all those seeking a Catholic education for their children. However, enrolment of a student into an Archdiocesan Catholic school or Catholic school of choice cannot be guaranteed. The Archdiocesan Catholic school system has a particular responsibility to welcome, accept and support those who are poor, marginalised and in most need. Our conviction is that no student will be refused enrolment or be disadvantaged because of an inability on the part of parents/guardians to meet financial requirements.

1.1 Catholic System Schools established and maintained by the Archdiocese strive to be authentically Catholic and faithful to the Church, its traditions and teachings.

1.2 The Catholic school is a community whose mission is to provide its members with an holistic education which takes place in an environment formed by the authentic teachings and values of the Catholic Church.

1.3 The Catholic school community strives for strong partnerships with the parishes it serves. These partnerships must be demonstrated and strengthened by the enrolment procedure and practice.

1.4 Those who choose a Catholic school for their children do so on the understanding that they respect and agree to support the Catholic identity of the school and acknowledge the importance of religious education for their children.

1.5 Catholic System schools are open to all who are willing to commit to support the philosophy, values and aims of Catholic schooling.

Enrolment Policy for Catholic Systemic Schools

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Catholic Education Commission of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn is responsible to the Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn for developing, monitoring and evaluating enrolment policies for Catholic System Schools.

2.2 The Principal, in collaboration with the Pastor, staff and School Board has responsibility for ensuring that the authentic vision of Catholic education in the community remains the guiding principle in the application of the enrolment policy.

2.3 The Principal is responsible for enrolments. The Principal may form an enrolment committee to provide advice. Ordinarily, the Committee will comprise the Parish Priest/Chaplain (or his representative) and a representative of the School Board as members. The Principal will chair the Committee.

2.4 At St Thomas the apostle Primary School the principal presents in Term 1 each year an enrolment timeline which outlines all the relevant dates and times for the enrolment procedures.

3.0 ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

3.1 General

3.1.1 At initial enrolment, all parents must give a firm undertaking that they will accept and support during the period of their child's enrolment the life, nature and identity of the Catholic school, including the appropriate participation of their children in the approved religious education programs.

3.1.2 No child is to be denied Catholic schooling simply because of an inability (as opposed to an unwillingness) of a parent/guardian, to meet financial requirements.

3.1.3 The attention of parents/guardians is drawn to the fact that acceptance of their children into a Catholic System primary school does not confer an automatic entitlement to enrolment in a Catholic System secondary school. The enrolment of a student in a Catholic System secondary school is a new process and requires the completion and submission of a secondary school enrolment application.

3.1.4 Enrolment applications received after the due date will only be considered if vacancies still exist, irrespective of where they might otherwise be placed in the priority order.

3.1.5 Special enrolment conditions apply from time to time as part of the planning process to ensure the choice of Catholic schooling is provided to as many people as possible. Current enrolment conditions are detailed at **Schedule B**.

3.1.6 The Director of Catholic Education may authorise the refusal of an enrolment into a particular Catholic school if such enrolment would adversely impact on the Archdiocesan provision of Catholic education Enrolment Policy for Catholic Systemic Schools

3.2 **Enrolment Categories**

3.2.1 Kindergarten Enrolments

It is generally desirable for schools to adopt a cut-off enrolment date whereby children commencing in Kindergarten should be five (5) years of age by 30 April of the year of enrolment.

3.2.2 **Early Age Enrolments**

3.2.2.1 The Principal has the discretion to process an early age enrolment (Primary or accelerated Secondary school entry) if special circumstances exist.

3.2.2.2 Parents must be informed that the school will assess the child's readiness and learning after consultation with the Special Needs Education Services Coordinator.

3.2.2.3 For individual cases (primary and secondary school entry) where it is believed that the readiness of a child would warrant his or her enrolment at an early age, the Principal must consult with the Coordinator of Special Needs Education Services for an individual assessment of the child's readiness and learning needs.

3.2.2.4 Before agreeing to the early enrolment of the child the Principal must seek written approval from the Director.

3.2.2.5 The Principal must inform the child's parents of this consultation process at the time of the enrolment application.

3.2.2.6 Early enrolments in the ACT do not attract any ACT Government funding unless the enrolment meets the specific criteria determined by the ACT Government.

See **Schedule D**

3.2.3 **Students with Disabilities**

3.2.3.1 Principals must refer to the Disability Discrimination Act which can be located in the Policy and Procedures Manual or on the CEO website

<http://ceo.cg.catholic.edu.au/policies/disability.htm>

3.2.3.2 When processing enrolment applications from parents/guardians of students with disabilities who seek to be included in regular classes within the school, Principals must follow the enrolment processes detailed in **Schedule A** attached to this policy.

3.2.3.3 The Coordinator of Special Needs Education Services must be contacted for advice during consideration of an enrolment application for a student with disabilities.

3.2.5 **Conditional Enrolment**

The Principal may, in discussion with the student, parents, priest, staff and CEO personnel, enrol a student on a conditional basis in light of the student's particular situation and/or needs at the time of or during the student's enrolment.

4.0 ENROLMENT PRIORITIES

In implementing the Enrolment Procedures contained in Section 3 and the restrictions outlined in Schedule B, the following hierarchy of priority has been established for the consideration of enrolment applications at each school when enrolment applications exceed available spaces.

4.1 Primary

4.1.1 Baptised Catholic children who are members of the designated local parish communities.

4.1.2 Siblings of children already attending the primary school.

4.1.3 Baptised Catholic children from other parishes who cannot obtain places in their local parish primary school.

4.1.4 Baptised Catholic children from non-Catholic primary schools whose residential address is in the designated priority local parish communities.

4.1.5 Baptised Catholic children whose parents/guardians seek to enrol them in a parish primary school outside their own parish but who can obtain places in their own parish primary school.

4.1.6 Other children whose parents/guardians desire and are committed to a Catholic Education.

4.2 Secondary

Baptised Catholic children who attend a Catholic school (where available) have first priority in an Catholic System secondary school where their residential address is in the designated priority enrolment area for that school.

4.2.1 Baptised Catholic children who:

- attend a Catholic school; or
- are members of the local parish community in rural areas where a Catholic school is not available, and, where applicable, whose residential address is in the designated priority enrolment area. See **Schedule B**.

4.2.2 Siblings of children already attending the school.

4.2.3 Baptised Catholic children from non-Catholic schools whose residential address is in the designated priority enrolment area. The family of these children **MUST** provide an up to date reference from their Parish Priest indicating that they are practising Catholics in the Parish.

4.2.4 Other children who have been enrolled in a Catholic school for a period of at least 3 years and whose residential address is in the designated priority enrolment area. See **Schedule B**.

4.2.5 Baptised Catholic children who attend a Catholic school and whose residential address is outside the designated priority enrolment area.

Note: These children have first priority in Catholic System secondary schools where their residential address is in the designated priority enrolment area for that school.

4.2.6 Baptised Catholic children from non-Catholic schools whose residential address is outside the designated priority enrolment area. The family of these children MUST provide an up to date reference from their Parish Priest indicating that they are practising Catholics in the Parish.

4.2.7 Baptised Catholic children from non-Catholic schools whose residential address is within the designated priority enrolment area who cannot provide a reference from a Parish Priest.

4.2.8 Baptised Catholic children from non-Catholic schools who are outside the designated priority who cannot provide a reference from a Parish Priest.

4.2.9 Other children who have been enrolled in a Catholic school for a period of at least 3 years and whose residential address is outside the designated priority enrolment area.

4.2.10 Other children whose parents/guardians desire and are committed to Catholic education.

5.0 PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 All parents enrolling their children in a Catholic Archdiocesan school must complete the official enrolment form and return it by the due date. Such action, however, does not guarantee enrolment in the school. Parents are expected to support their local parish primary school wherever possible.

5.2 Applications, irrespective of their priority listing, received after the due date will only be considered if vacancies still exist.

5.3 Parents must be prepared to abide by the provisions specified in the enrolment form especially as regards the support they will give the school in the Catholic education of their children.

5.4 The child's parents/guardians must recognise and be prepared to meet their financial responsibilities for the ongoing enrolment of the child subject to section 3.1.2. of this policy document.

5.5 The child's parent/guardian must advise the Principal of any Court Order(s) that may exist in regard to the child and MUST provide a certified copy of the Order(s) for the child's school file.

6.0 ENROLMENT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

6.1 The School will provide on request data to the Catholic Education Commission on the mix of Catholic, Christian and non-Christian enrolments.

6.2 The Commission will monitor enrolment information submitted by the school and action taken by the school to ensure the Catholicity of the school and the basic aims of Catholic education are maintained. See Schedule C attached to this Policy.

References

Nil

Forms

Nil

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SCHEDULE A
ENROLLING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

1. When responding to and processing enrolment applications from students with disabilities who seek to be included into regular classes within the school, Principals must refer to:

- 1.1 CEO Policy and Procedures dealing with aspects of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and related Education Standards.
- 1.2 Relevant sections of the Archdiocesan Special Learning Support Handbook (June 2004).
- 1.3 The Learning Support Contact Officer for advice.

2. A member of the Learning Support Team must be involved in the processing of enrolment applications via an enrolment process for students with special needs in the following instances:

- 2.1 Where a student would obviously be eligible for support through the Commonwealth Special Education Program because of an established disability (see pp 23-24 and pp 75-79, Special Needs Learning Support Handbook).
- 2.2 Where a Principal has been informed of a student's disability such as ongoing medical and/or behavioural condition (eg ADHD) and whilst not eligible for Special Education funding, such a student would require particular considerations for successful inclusion (see p25) Special Needs Learning Support Handbook).
- 2.3 Where a student with special needs is transferring from another Archdiocesan school.

3. People involved in the enrolment process should include:

- 3.1 The School Principal
- 3.2 The School Learning Support Teacher
- 3.3 The student's parents/guardians.
- 3.4 An Education Officer from the CEO Learning Support Team.
- 3.5 Assistant Manager, CEO Planning and Facilities, as appropriate.

4. The Parish Priest/Chaplain should be informed of the enrolment application and may wish to be involved in the process.

5. People involved in the enrolment process may also include:

- 5.1 The relevant classroom teacher(s).
- 5.2 The student.
- 5.3 Other person(s) deemed appropriate.

6. All those involved in the enrolment process will need to discuss the following matters:

- 6.1 The student's individual needs.
- 6.2 The existing school resources, including facilities and DDA requirement as appropriate.

6.3 The expectations of the parents/guardians.

6.4 The types of funding and resources that may be available.

7. To ensure effective transition planning (for students with disabilities preparing for a transition between a system primary school to a system secondary college) the following procedures will occur during Term 1 each year:

7.1 The Catholic Education Office (through Special Needs Education Services) will forward a list of all eligible students with disabilities enrolled currently in years 5 and 6 in system primary schools to relevant secondary college Principals.

Enrolment Policy for Catholic Systemic Schools Catholic Education Office –
Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn – Policies and Procedures Manual 8/11

7.2 This confidential list will include details of the students' disabilities and, where appropriate, an indication of students with disabilities with high support needs. Students with high support needs are those with a disability relating to one or more of the following:

7.2.1 a severe to profound intellectual disability.

7.2.2 a significant physical disability or medical condition which seriously affects mobility and/or toileting and self-care (often indicative of the need for major access considerations within the school setting).

7.2.3 a severe to profound permanent vision and/or hearing impairment.

7.2.4 a student with a severe social and/or emotional disorder as related to a Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) or a mental health diagnosis.

7.3 Parents/guardians will be informed by the primary school Principal that relevant secondary colleges have been notified of the possibility of enrolment enquiries in respect of their child. The Principal in cooperation with the Learning Support Teacher (feeder primary school) will encourage the parents/guardians to make early contact with the relevant secondary college(s).

7.4 Parents'/guardians' enquiries (and lodging of an enrolment application) may be made prior to the secondary college's official enrolment period. Such forward planning on behalf of students with disabilities assists in the preparation and discernment of the needs of the student, their family and the secondary college.

7.5 In certain instances, e.g. where major access issues need consideration/guardians, parents will be encouraged to make contact with the proposed secondary colleges(s) during their child's Year 5 year.

7.6 Once the parents/guardians of the student with disabilities have made contact with the college and proceeded with an official enrolment application, the secondary college Principal will inform the CEO Contact Officer from Learning Support to further the enrolment process as per established procedures.

8. The following enrolment procedures relate to the additional steps required for the enrolment of students with high support needs (as defined in 7.2 above).

The steps (additional to the *procedures described in pp 75-79 of the Archdiocesan Special Needs Learning Support Handbook* are:

8.1 During the enrolment panel process the Education Officer (Learning Support) will compile the report of the meeting on behalf of the participants, in addition to providing relevant information and support for the Principal who will chair the meeting. The report will contain the major points of discussion and agreed understandings of the meeting. This summary will be corroborated verbally by the meeting participants, in a general sense, at the end of the meeting.

8.2 The Education Officer will then draft the written report of the meeting in consultation with the Coordinator (Learning Support) and the Principal.

8.3 The Principal will forward a copy to the parents/guardians for comments. An agreed final report will then be prepared and distributed to meeting participants.

8.4 The Education Officer, in collaboration with the Coordinator (Learning Support), will provide a summary report of the proposed model of support for the student's enrolment including:

8.4.1 personnel support (e.g. Learning Support Assistant need).

8.4.2 school and curriculum access needs (e.g. need for building modification, use of Braille).

8.4.3 issues requiring further assessment (e.g. Occupational Therapy report to establish disability access compliance).

8.4.4 cost estimates for the total enrolment period.

8.5 This summary report will be discussed directly with the Principal and then forwarded to the Director and Heads of Divisions of the Catholic Education Office.

8.6 The Director and relevant Heads of Divisions will consider all the details of the enrolment. The decision to enrol and the details of the model of support will be made by the Director based on recommendations through the Heads of Division.

8.7 Based on the outcomes in 8.6 (above) the Principal will draft a response to the parents/guardians e.g. an offer of enrolment detailing the proposed model of support. The Director will review the proposed correspondence and approve or amend as required prior to despatch to parents.

8.8 The Principal will inform the Education Officer, Learning Support, of the parents'/guardians response to the correspondence in 8.7 (above). Transition planning or other relevant actions will follow.

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SCHEDULE B
SPECIAL ENROLMENT CONDITIONS FOR
CATHOLIC SYSTEM SCHOOLS

1. ACT Secondary Colleges

1.1 Priority enrolment areas for ACT Secondary Colleges refer to the Student's residential address not the primary school attended. The current priority enrolments areas for ACT Secondary Colleges (in consultation with Congregational Colleges) are as follows:

1.1.1 Merici College (Years 7-12 girls) at Braddon: The parishes within the North Canberra, Queanbeyan, Belconnen and Gungahlin districts.

1.1.2 St Clare's College (Years 7-12 girls) at Griffith: The parishes within the South Canberra, Woden Valley, Weston Creek and Tuggeranong districts.

1.1.3 MacKillop Catholic College (Years 7-12 coeducation) at Tuggeranong: the parishes within the Tuggeranong, Weston Creek, Woden Valley and Queanbeyan districts.

1.1.4 St Frances Xavier College (Years 7-12 coeducation) at Florey: The parishes within the Belconnen, Gungahlin and North Canberra districts.

1.2 If students within these priority enrolment areas for a particular College have preference for another College, they will be catered for if spaces are available, and within the normal CEO enrolment policy.

1.3 Acceptance into an out of priority enrolment area Catholic System primary school is not a guarantee of enrolment into a particular Catholic System secondary school.

2. NSW Secondary Colleges

None

3. ACT Primary Schools

None

4. NSW Primary Schools

None

SCHEDULE C
CATHOLICITY OF ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOLS

The Catholic Education Commission will consider the following criteria in assessing the maintenance of the Catholicity of Archdiocesan schools.

1. Treasures New and Old Curriculum

- 1.1 The implementation of the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum *Treasures New and Old* into the schools.
- 1.2 The embedding of *Treasures New and Old* throughout all the Curriculum Documents.

2. Prayer Life in School

The importance of the formal and informal prayer and liturgy as a vital aspect of the religious life of the school.

3. Sacramental Programs

- 3.1 The School's preparation for and celebration of the sacramental initiation of its Catholic students undertaken in support of the parish based sacramental programs.
- 3.2 The involvement of the school community with the Parish Priest, parish personnel and CCD personnel in parish liturgies.

4. Pastoral Care

The implementation of appropriate pastoral care and student support programs for students/families/staff based on the authentic teachings and values of the Catholic Church.

5. Staff

The commitment and example of staff, particularly to the students, in witnessing the values espoused by the Catholic Church and the Archdiocesan Catholic Education System.

6. Parents

- 6.1 The recognition and support of parents in their primary role as educators of their children particularly in regards to the religious development and pastoral care of their children.
- 6.2 The assistance to parents in the preparation of their children for the sacraments.
- 6.3 The recognition of the spiritual and religious needs of children from faith traditions other than the Catholic faith.
- 6.4 The support of parents in difficulties in meeting financial obligations associated with the school.

SCHEDULE D
Early Age enrolments in Kindergarten in ACT Schools

ACT Government has advised it will not provide per capita funding for students below the minimum starting age (ie. should be 5 years of age by 30 April in year of enrolment.)

CEC Enrolment Policy states:

It is generally desirable for schools to adopt a cut off enrolment date whereby children commencing in kindergarten should be five (5) years of age by 30 April of the year of enrolment.

The Principal has the discretion to process an early age enrolment ... if special circumstances exist.

The Principal has the discretion to process an early age enrolment ... if special circumstances exist.

...the Principal must consult with the Coordinator of Special Needs Education Services for an individual assessment of the child's readiness and learning needs.

Before agreeing to the early enrolment of a child the Principal must seek the approval of the Director.

Exceptions to ACT Government Policy are:

If the child attended school in another jurisdiction in a program deemed equivalent to ACT Kindergarten.
Where a child is assessed as being gifted.

Criteria to establish giftedness:

Individual psychometric assessment which indicates a full scale score of 120+ ie. Superior range.

Assessment must be current ie. Within 6 months of the enrolment application.

Cost assessment is the responsibility of parents

Regardless of ACT Government exceptions, CEC Enrolment Policy still applies.