

"The whole of life
belongs to God."



St Columba's School

Engaging • Inspiring • Empowering

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Enrolment Policy

Rationale

At St Columba's we believe that Catholic children have the right to an education in a Catholic school and that the Catholic school is the most appropriate means of ensuring the overall education of Catholic children. Therefore at St Columba's School, the Mission and Vision Statements and Policies of the school will always consider the education of the whole child and enrolments will be based on these understandings.

The purpose of the St Columba's Enrolment Policy is to provide all the stakeholders in our school with a clear understanding of the processes and protocols for enrolment at St Columba's School. Our enrolment policy reflects a fair and consistent process for all enrolments.

Policy Statement

The enrolment policy of St Columba's School has a prime responsibility to service the needs of children living in the community of St Columba's Parish, Ballarat North.

The school will support the parents of these children in their choice of a Catholic education. The parents, in their turn have the responsibility to support the school in all aspects of its work to provide the best education possible according to Catholic tradition *and in compliance with relevant Victorian and Australian Government Legislation.*

The enrolment policy of St Columba's Primary School is based on the following guidelines. Should the school reach a point where there are more applications than places available, enrolment will be based on the criteria below:

POLICY GUIDELINES	GUIDELINE INDICATORS
The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria encourages all Catholic parents to seek a place in a Catholic school for their children. Students of other faith traditions will be considered for enrolment	St Columba's School will provide a Catholic education that is concerned with the development of the whole child – spiritually, emotionally, physically, academically and aesthetically. Enrolment will not be reserved exclusively for Catholic children, however priority will be given to Catholic families who seek enrolment for their children at St Columba's.

<p>provided it does not result in the exclusion of catholic students. All parents will be required to give an understanding that they will respect the life, nature and identity of the school.</p> <p>Students of other faiths or of no stated faith will be expected to participate fully in all aspects of school life.</p> <p>Children enrolled in the school will not be excluded from Religious Education classes, Sacramental Programs and School Liturgies regardless of perceived faith commitment of the parents.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Entry will be ensured for siblings of children currently attending the school. 2. Catholic children living within the Parish of St Columba's will have the next priority. 3. Catholic children who do not live in the Parish who have legitimate reasons for seeking enrolment will be considered next. 4. Children from other denominations will be given the next level of priority, where evidence is provided. 5. Children with no stated religious background will be welcome to enrol provided places are available. <p>Note For the purposes of this policy, children baptised in an Orthodox tradition will be treated equally with those baptised in a Catholic tradition.</p>
<p>By law, children must turn five by the 30 April of their first year of school.</p>	<p>Expression of Interest will not be considered for enrolment until the year preceding the child's expected starting time for school.</p> <p>Expression of Interest forms for St Columba's will begin at the start of the second week of Term One of that year and the CEO Ballarat will have an online application to be filled as well.</p> <p>Once applications for expression of interest close all Principals will gather to discuss, and offers will go out in writing to families to accept or decline.</p> <p>An enrolment form, birth certificate, and immunisation certificate are prerequisite documentation for enrolment. If you are "opting out" of immunisation you need to have a signed Immunisation medical exemption Immunisation Medical Exemption form signed by your GP.</p> <p>A Baptism certificate is a prerequisite for Catholic children enrolling.</p>

<p>The Principal has ultimate discretion in determining all offers of enrolment.</p> <p>Before any enrolment can be confirmed, it must receive the endorsement of the Governing Authority, in accordance with their duties under Canon Law.</p>	<p>A Register of Enrolments containing all necessary information will be maintained at the school.</p> <p>All information gathered will be maintained according to the Privacy Act 2000.</p> <p>Once a place at St Columba's has been offered and accepted you will be given an application form to complete and return to the school by a chosen date.</p> <p>Parents or caregivers who wish to enrol their child at St Columba's School will be interviewed by the Principal (or their delegate) on behalf of the Governing Authority.</p>
<p>Generally, the intellectual and physical capacity of the child is not a criterion of entry to the school.</p> <p>Integrated children have a right to apply for a place in our school in accordance with the priorities as listed above.</p>	<p>Children with additional needs shall be considered on an individual basis. The Principal, in consultation with the Governing Authority and consultants from the CEOB will assess the school's capacity to provide adequate staffing resources and facilities such as to ensure that St Columba's can cater for additional needs of their children.</p> <p>Additional avenues of support (finance, staffing, resources etc.) will be explored.</p> <p>The parents of children with additional needs will meet with the Learning Diversity Leader as soon as practicable to ensure that the transition to school is made as smooth as possible.</p>
<p>In accordance with the values of Catholic Education, no student will be excluded because of their parents' inability to pay tuition fees.</p>	<p>Some level of fee alleviation is available in all genuine cases provided that an application has been made for the Family Fee Assistance Program if eligible. This is to be budgeted for by the school on an annual basis.</p> <p>Families in distress who wish to place their children in St Columba's School and who meet the criteria above will have an equal chance of enrolling their child at our school. Any offer of enrolment remains at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with the Governing Authority.</p>

	On acceptance of enrolment, both parents will make a commitment to the payment of school fees unless an alternative arrangement is made after consultation with the Principal on behalf of the Governing Authority.
Foundation Children will be eased into regular schooling.	Successful applicants within their first Foundation year at school will be required to participate in a Transition Program held during Term Four.

VRQA	
Enrolment Standards	
Drafted-	2014
Ratified -	2014
Reviewed -	2019
Next Review -	2022

APPENDIX 1

Relevant legislation to be considered when enrolling students in Catholic Schools

The Victorian Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007. The regulations impose a requirement on a registered school to have a clearly defined enrolment policy that complies with all applicable State and Commonwealth laws. Referred therein is the main legislation affecting school enrolments. Each school must be familiar with the relevant provisions of this legislation and, if appropriate, prepare policies for administration and enforcement of relevant procedures.

Equal Opportunity Act 1996 (Vic). This legislation prohibits discrimination by an educational authority against a person in deciding who should be admitted as a student, in the terms on which the authority admits a person as a student, or by refusing or failing to accept the person's application for administration as a student. However, an exception is provided for an educational authority that operates an educational institution wholly or mainly for students of a particular sex, religious belief, age or age group, such that it may exclude from that institution people who are not of the particular sex, religious belief, age or age group. All other discrimination in enrolment of students is prohibited.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth). Under this federal legislation, discrimination based on disability is unlawful. It applies to school authorities and their employees. The definition of disability is broad and includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological or learning disability, physical disfigurement, and the presence in the body of a disease-causing organism. Relevant for enrolments, it is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person's disability, or a disability of any of the other person's associates, by refusing or failing to accept the person's application for admission as a student; or in the terms and conditions on which it is prepared to admit the person as a student. However, it is not unlawful to refuse or fail to accept a person's application for admission as a student in an educational institution where the person, if admitted as a student by the educational authority, would require services or facilities that are not required by students who do not have a disability and the provision of which would impose unjustifiable hardship on the educational authority.

Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cwlth). This legislation governs how schools must handle personal information collected as part of the enrolment process. Schools will have adopted a Privacy Policy to reflect their acts and practice in management of personal information in compliance with the legislation. Schools should also determine what is the necessary information for collection, provide information about collection and, where necessary, obtain consents to the collection, use and disclosure of that information. For these purposes, schools should include in enrolment forms an information collection notice, which should also be contained in the school's Privacy Policy and where applicable should be located on the school's website.

Enrolment of students with additional learning needs

Catholic schools are expected to welcome parents who wish to enrol a child with additional learning needs and do everything possible to accommodate the child's needs. The process for enrolling students with special needs should be the same as that for enrolling any student, and should conform to the Enrolment Process. Primary and secondary schools should collaborate to ensure coordination and consistency of policy and processes. Schools are required to comply with the relevant Australian and Victorian Government legislation when considering the enrolment of a child with additional learning needs in a Catholic school.