



Enrolment Policy

Rationale

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 Joseph's Primary School, Red Cliffs, 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.

Policy Statement

St Joseph's Primary School, Red Cliffs School embraces the mission of the Church by welcoming the enrolment of all students and families who share their vision and educational philosophy.

Principles:

- As a Catholic school, SJPS has a particular responsibility to provide access to children baptised in the Catholic faith.
- SJPS is open to all who are willing to commit to support the philosophy, values and aims of Catholic schooling. While there is an invitation to all, the practicalities of being able to accommodate enrolments beyond current physical facilities may be limited by available resources.
- Students other than Catholics will be considered for enrolment provided this does not result in the exclusion of Catholic students (see enrolment criteria).
- SJPS actively seeks to engage families and carers as partners in their child's education process and the life of the school in an atmosphere of co-responsibility and co-accountability.
- All parents will be required to give an understanding that they will respect the life, nature and identity of the school.
- All students will be expected to participate fully in all aspects of school life including participation in the religious activities of the school.
- SJPS is an inclusive and therefore welcoming school that accepts and supports those most in need.
- SJPS will provide Catholic education that is in accordance with diocesan, state and commonwealth educational policies and standards.

Enrolment Selection Criteria

a. Starting School: Prep

By law, children must have turned five by the 30th April of their first year of school.

Enrolments will be allocated in the following order of priority:

- Siblings of children already enrolled in the school will be given priority
- Baptised children who are resident in the Red Cliffs parish.
- Baptised children who do not reside in the parish but are recognised as parishioners by the governing authority.
- Baptised children of Catholic families from parishes that do not have a Catholic school.
- Baptised children of Catholic families from other parishes (for pastoral reasons).
- Children not baptised from families in the parish with one parent a baptised Catholic
- Baptised children of Christian families who reside in the parish.
- Baptised children of Christian families who reside outside the parish.
- Children from a faith background other than Christian or other pastoral considerations

b. Other Year levels

- Catholic students who wish to transfer from another Catholic or government school will be considered as a priority according to criteria for Prep enrolments and may take into account any additional circumstances. If it is not possible to offer a place, the school will assist in providing information regarding enrolment in nearby Catholic schools.
- Baptised students of Christian families or of other faiths who wish to transfer from a Catholic or government school will be considered according to criteria for Prep enrolments and may take into account additional circumstances. The enrolment will depend on a place being available and does not result in the exclusion of a Catholic student. If it is not possible to offer a place, the school will assist in providing information regarding enrolment in nearby Catholic schools.

It is expected that SJPS is provided with all relevant information on a transferring student. The school may request to make contact with the student's current school.

c. Enrolment of Students under the Minimum School Entry Age

- The minimum starting age for a child to be enrolled in a Victorian school is four years and eight months as a child must turn five by 30 April in the year of starting school.
- The enrolment of students under the minimum starting age is not recommended.
- In the rare situation where a parent/guardian seeks enrolment of a child under the minimum starting age the school will make an assessment of the child's readiness for school. This will require supporting documentation as requested from the school. This documentation will need to be from appropriate health or education professionals detailing substantive reasons for early school entry as well as a letter from the parent(s)/guardian(s) requesting an exemption from the policy.
- In the event that a child satisfies the readiness assessment and the school principal supports the enrolment, final approval needs to be obtained from the Director of Catholic Education before the enrolment can proceed.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide all appropriate documentation to the principal for submission to the Director for consideration.

d. Out of Home Care, School enrolment responsibilities (outside normal enrolment timelines) in accordance with Out of Home Care Education Commitment Partnering Agreement, 2018

If Child Protection or Department of Health and Human Services is involved schools are expected to:

- (If a place is available), Enrol a student without delay – any delay of more than one day must be endorsed by the Director of Catholic Education
- Ensure that accurate information regarding out-of-home care status is recorded in the school's student information record-keeping mechanism
- Liaise with the student's previous school or early childhood education service to ensure the transfer of relevant information including the Individual Education Plan
- Establish a Student Support Group in the first week of the student's enrolment
- Support the student to stay at the school or maintain a connection with their school if a change must occur
- When a student leaves the school, provide appropriate information to the new school regarding the student's learning and support needs to ensure a smooth transition

d. 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.

f. Enrolment of Students from Interstate

Developed & Ratified: 31/05/2016	Last Review/Revision: 17/3/2020	Next Review: 2023
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When enrolling students whose previous school was interstate, all schools must use the protocols of the Interstate Student Data Transfer Note (ISDTN). This is a mandatory requirement of the Australian Government. It is the responsibility of the enrolling school to initiate and manage this process, and be sensitive to parent/student consent requirements for the provision of information. All relevant documents and information are available at the www.mceetya.edu.au/transfernote.

Enrolment Procedures

- Each Catholic school is responsible for its own enrolment policy and procedures. Enrolment at a Catholic primary school does not guarantee enrolment at a Catholic secondary school.
- The principal will consult with the governing authority on all matters pertaining to enrolment.
- Annual enrolments dates, forms and procedures for Prep (Foundation) students and other year levels will be available on the school website and advertised in school and parish newsletters and community news.
- A timeline will be available indicating when enrolments forms must be lodged, interview dates, notification of enrolment outcome and acceptance date. This will be provided on school website and updated annually.
- The school will provide parents with the fees policy and procedures at the time of the enrolment enquiry (see fees and levies).
- The principal on behalf of the governing authority will interview all parents and the child/children they wish to enrol at SJPS.
- Students enrolling in SJPS are enrolled under the proviso that all students participate in the religious activities of the school.
- Parents wishing to transfer their child from another school will be required to complete an “Application for Enrolment”.
- When enrolling students whose previous school was interstate, SJPS will use the protocols of the Interstate Student Data Transfer Note (ISDTN).
- SJPS welcomes parents who wish to enrol a child with additional learning needs. The process for enrolling students with special needs or with a disability is the same as that for enrolling any student in accordance with the Enrolment Process Flowchart. SJPS will comply with the relevant Australian and Victorian Government legislation when considering the enrolment of a child with additional learning.
- During the process of enrolment, the particular learning needs of the student will be discussed. Parents have a responsibility to disclose all factors and relevant reports that impact on the child’s learning needs and potential resource requirements.
- All prospective enrolments will require relevant documentation including birth and baptism certificates, immunisation, visa (if relevant) and parenting orders (if relevant)
- All information gathered will be maintained according to the Privacy Act 2000.
- A Register of Enrolments containing all necessary information will be maintained at the school.
- Any concerns about the implementation of the enrolment policy at SJPS may be referred to the Catholic Education Office Ballarat for advice.

Fees and Levies

- SJPS School Advisory Council recommends to the governing authority the fees and levies. While it is important that parents appreciate their responsibility to pay, no child will be excluded from the school or school activities because of non-payment of such fees and levies.
- The school offers a number of methods for paying fees to reduce any financial burden and to assist financial planning.
- If a family is experiencing difficulty in meeting the required fee payment, it is the responsibility of the parent/s to contact the school as soon as the issue arises.
- Families may also be able to access the *Family Fee Assistance Scheme*.
- School fees and levy structure will be contained in the enrolment package.

Appealing an Enrolment Decision

- An appeal of the enrolment decision can be made where a family believes that a breach of the school enrolment policy or a breach of the relevant legislation has occurred.

- An appeal is made to the Director of Catholic Education, PO Box 576, Ballarat VIC 3350 or director@ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au or phone 03 5337 7135.
- The Director of Catholic Education will investigate the matter, consider if a breach has occurred and make a recommendation to the Principal if this is the case.

Communication

The policy will be available on the school website with accompanying enrolment forms and timelines for the enrolment process.

Termination of Agreement

The school administration, in consultation with the school community wherever appropriate, will prescribe standards of dress, appearance and behaviour for the student body. As a term of your child's enrolment, parents and guardians are expected to comply with the school's behaviour aims and the school's Code of Conduct, and to support the school in upholding prescribed standards of dress, appearance and behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour by a child, or repeated behaviour by a parent or guardian that, in the school's view, is unacceptable and damaging to the partnership between parent/guardian and school, may result in suspension or termination of the child's enrolment.

Relevant Legislation

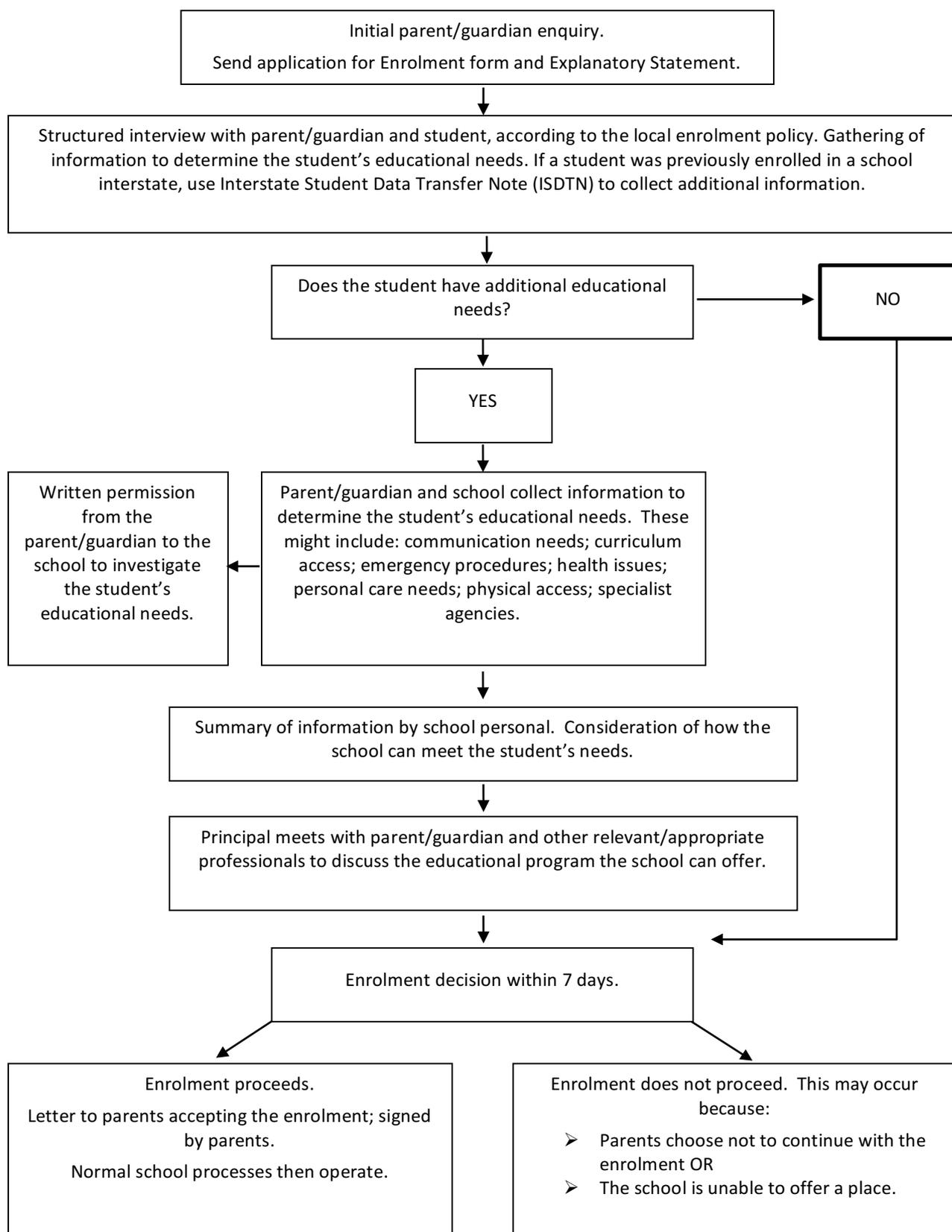
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Privacy Act 1988 and Privacy Amendment (Notifiable Data Breaches) Act 2017
- Commission for Children and Young People Act (Vic) 2012
- Children Youth and Families Act (Vic) 2005
- Equal Opportunity Act (Vic) 1996
- Health Records Act (Vic) 2001

Key Related Documents

- Privacy Policy
- Out of Home Care Education Commitment (Partnering Agreement) 2018

Enrolment Process Flowchart

In the interests of consistency and transparency, SJPS School, as recommended by the Diocese of Ballarat, follows the recommended Enrolment Process presented in the following flowchart:



Relevant Legislation

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 (Cwith) & Disability Standards for Education 2005

- 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, psychical disfigurement, and the presence in the body of a disease-causing organism.
- Relevant to enrolments, it is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person's disability or the disability of any of the other person's associates:
 - By refusing or failing to accept the persons application for admission as a student; or
 - In the terms or conditions on which it is prepared to admit the person as a student.
- However it is not unlawful if the school or institution is specifically for children / students with a particular disability and person wishing to enrol does not have that disability or if the child / student requires services or facilities which would be an unjustifiable hardship for the educational authority.
- See the Disability Discrimination (Appendix 4) & Disability Standards (Appendix 5) Fact Sheets for more information.

Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cwith)

- 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 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.