



Developed	2012
Ratified	18/03/2020
Approved By	Governing Authority
Last Review	March 2020
Next Review	2025

# Enrolment Policy

## Purpose

St Mary's embraces the mission of the Church by welcoming the enrolment of all students and families who share their vision and educational philosophy. Inspired and governed by the message and person of Jesus Christ, and committed to the physical, intellectual, social and spiritual development of each person, the School provides Catholic education of the highest quality to its students.

The Enrolment Policy aims to provide clear and consistent guidelines for the enrolment of students into St Mary's and is in line with Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) Enrolment Policy.

## Scope

This policy applies to all students, prospective students, parents and guardians and staff of St Mary's.

## Legislative Context

- 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

## Policy Statement

- St Mary's embraces the mission of the Church by welcoming the enrolment of all students and families who share their vision and educational philosophy.
- St Mary's strives to be authentically Catholic and faithful to the mission of the Catholic Church.
- St Mary's 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.
- St Mary's has a particular responsibility to provide access to children baptised in the Catholic faith.
- St Mary's has a responsibility for being inclusive and therefore welcome, accept and support those most in need.
- St Mary's 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 students will be expected to participate fully in all aspects of school life including participation in the religious activities of the school.
- In diocesan locations where multiple Catholic schools co-exist, there will be ongoing dialogue and co-consideration of enrolment processes.
- St Mary's is an inclusive and welcoming school that accepts and supports those most

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in need.

- St Mary's will provide Catholic education that is in accordance with diocesan, state and commonwealth educational policies and standards.

## **Enrolment Selection Criteria**

### **1. Starting School: Prep/Foundation**

By law, children must have turned five by 30 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
- Baptised Catholic children who are resident in the parish.
- Baptised Catholic children who do not reside in the parish but are recognised as parishioners by the Parish Priest
- 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
- Children from another Christian tradition where adult baptism is active in that tradition
- Children baptised in another Christian tradition who reside in the parish
- Children baptised in another Christian tradition who reside outside the parish
- Children from a faith background other than Christian or other pastoral considerations.

### **2. Other Year Levels**

Catholic students who wish to transfer from another Catholic or government school will be considered as a priority according to the criteria for Prep enrolments and schools 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 another Catholic or government school will be considered according to the criteria for Prep enrolments and schools may take into account additional circumstances. The enrolment will depend on a place being available at the school 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 parents/guardians provide the school with all relevant information on a transferring student. The School may request to make contact with the student's current school.

### **3. 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. In the event that a child satisfies the readiness assessment and the Principal supports the enrolment, final approval needs to be obtained from the Director of Catholic Education before the enrolment can proceed.

Application for Director's approval needs to be completed on the *Application for Early Age Entry to School Form*.

Supporting documentation from appropriate health or education professionals detailing substantive reasons for early school entry must be attached to the application, as well as a letter from the parent(s)/guardian(s) requesting an exemption from the policy.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide all appropriate documentation to the principal for submission to the Director for consideration.

#### **4. Out of Home Care Enrolment Responsibilities**

These school enrolment responsibilities (outside normal enrolment timelines) are outlined in accordance with Out of Home Care Education Commitment Partnering Agreement, 2018.

If Child Protection or Department of Health and Human Services is involved St Mary's will:

- Enrol a student without delay (if a place is available), 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; and
- 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;

The Catholic Education Office Ballarat will:

- Facilitate the timely and effective enrolment of each student in out-of-home care by providing advice and support to schools; and
- Work with schools, Child Protection and Department of Health and Human Services to resolve any enrolment difficulties in a timely manner

#### **5. Enrolment of Students with Additional Learning Needs**

St Mary's welcomes parents who wish to enrol a student with additional learning needs and will do everything possible to accommodate the student's needs.

The process for enrolling students with additional needs is the same as that for enrolling any student and will conform to the enrolment process, with the addition of liaising with the Learning Diversity Leader at CEOB as part of the enrolment process.

St Mary's collaborates to ensure coordination and consistency of policy and processes when students are in transition. The School is required to comply with the relevant Australian and Victorian Government legislation Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 when considering the enrolment of a student with additional learning needs.

#### **6. Enrolment of Students from Interstate**

When enrolling students whose previous school was interstate, St Mary's 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 MCEETYA website [www.mceetya.edu.au/transfernote](http://www.mceetya.edu.au/transfernote).

### **Responsibility**

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<b>Approval Authority</b>	<b>Policy Sponsor</b>	<b>Administration</b>
Responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this policy	Responsible for maintaining the content of this policy as delegated by the Approval Authority	Responsible for the administration support for the maintenance of this policy as directed by the Policy Sponsor
Governing Authority	Principal	Compliance and Risk Manager

## Supporting Documents

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

## Promulgation

This policy will be communicated throughout the school community in the form of:

- policies section of the school website; and
- provided in the enrolment pack

## Implementation

This policy will be implemented throughout the school community via:

- policy library section of the school intranet;
- distribution of email to all staff; and
- policies section of the school website.