

Enrolment and Transfer Policy 2016

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1. RATIONALE AND AIMS

As members of the Diocese of Sandhurst, Catholic Education Wodonga schools uphold the ideal of providing Catholic schooling to all those seeking Catholic education for their children and who are willing to support the values and purposes of Catholic education.

'The Catholic School has an ecclesial identity, because it is 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.' (Ecclesia in Oceania 2001 n33)

Each Catholic school of the Diocese of Sandhurst:

'participates in the evangelising mission of the Church and is the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out. In this way Catholic schools are at once places of evangelisation, of complete formation, of enculturation, of apprenticeship in the lively dialogue between young people of different religions and social backgrounds. The ecclesial nature of the Catholic school, therefore, is written in the very heart of its identity as 'a teaching institution'.' (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium 1997 n19)

Any State or Federal laws, CECV or Diocesan guidelines and policies in relation to school enrolment will be complied with.

2. ENROLMENT PRINCIPLES

In attempting to realise the above aims Catholic Education Wodonga Council upholds the following beliefs and commitments.

2.1 We aim to:

- 2.1.1 Create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety.

3.1 We believe that:

- 3.1.1 Catholic education in Wodonga is a living expression of the dynamic and evolving tradition of the Church.
- 3.1.2 Catholic schools exist as an integral part of the Church's mission in the world.
- 3.1.3 Catholic schools exist as part of parish and are intrinsically connected with each other.
- 3.1.4 Children have a right to education in the faith and we have a responsibility to provide places for those who seek a Catholic education to the best of our ability.
- 3.1.5 Mutual respect, understanding and collaboration in the implementation of this policy are imperative.

4.1 We strive to fulfil the following commitments:

- 4.1.1 Catholic schools, established and maintained by the Diocese of Sandhurst, strive to be authentically Catholic and faithful to the mission of the Church.
- 4.1.2 A Catholic school is open to all who are willing to commit to support the philosophy, values and aims of Catholic schooling.
- 4.1.3 A Catholic school has a particular responsibility to provide access to children baptised in the Catholic faith.
- 4.1.4 Catholic schools have a particular responsibility to welcome, accept and support those in most need.
- 4.1.5 Catholic school enrolment policy should seek to include rather than exclude.
- 4.1.6 Catholic schools will strive to ensure that the enrolment process is a welcoming reflection of the teachings and values of the Church.
- 4.1.7 Catholic schools seek to actively 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.
- 4.1.8 Catholic schools in Wodonga are governed by Catholic Education Wodonga Council (CEWC) who is the responsible authority for each school community.
- 4.1.9 CEWC and the Diocese strive, as far as possible, to provide facilities for potential enrolments without unduly compromising the viability and vitality of each school.
- 4.1.10 Catholic schools respect the traditions of other faiths.
- 4.1.11 CEW schools work together on areas of common interest and concern regarding enrolment, including transfer between CEW schools and provision of learning opportunities and environments that are relevant to the individual needs of each student.

3. ENROLMENT POLICY

Enrolment will be at the discretion of the Principal of each school. Given that there are limitations created by philosophic, financial, physical, and industrial factors - decisions regarding enrolment will be directed by this policy and the Sandhurst Schools Education Board Enrolment Policy and Guidelines. If the need arises, the Principal will also establish a waiting list with a priority order.

Local pastoral discretion is an important element of decision making with regard to enrolment. Schools may exercise some flexibility where pastoral discretion is deemed necessary. Examples include:-

- Family breakdown
- Family mobility
- Parent(s) or guardian(s) not in a position to fully support the education of their child
- Students in “out of home care”.
- Children experiencing serious education disadvantage
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- Refugee status
- Late applications as a result of special circumstances such as relocation

Students with Disabilities and Impairments will be enrolled along with other eligible children. The enrolment of students with special needs should be considered in the light of relevant laws and the policies, guidelines and protocols of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and the Sandhurst School Education Board.

ENROLMENT GUIDELINES

Within the context of this Policy, the following criteria will be applied in combination when selecting students for enrolment.

It is recognised that decisions facing schools will vary from year to year. Each school needs to take into consideration its own individual circumstances and those of its families.

In cases where enrolment applications exceed the positions available the school will assist families to find enrolment in another Catholic school.

3.1 Primary Schools Enrolment Guidelines

- 3.1.1** Children baptised in the Catholic faith who are members of the Wodonga Catholic Parish community.
- 3.1.2** Children baptised in the Catholic faith from other Parishes which do not have a primary school or where the designated parish primary school has no vacancies.
- 3.1.3** Siblings of other children already enrolled who are not baptised in the Catholic faith.
- 3.1.4** Children of other Christian Churches and other faith traditions, with their parents, respect and agree to support the Catholic mission of the school including the religious education it offers for their children.
- 3.1.5** Children who, with their parents, respect and agree to support the Catholic mission of the school including the religious education it offers for their children.
- 3.1.6** Children with specific personal, educational and wellbeing needs, children from under represented groups in our school community.
- 3.1.7** Other considerations may include, a family association with the school and being the sibling or child of a past pupil. These considerations should not preclude other relevant

factors being taken into consideration when determining which children will be offered enrolment.

3.2 Secondary Schools Enrolment Guidelines

- 3.2.1** Children baptised in the Catholic faith who have completed primary education in a CEW primary school and who live in the designated region which the Catholic secondary school serves.
- 3.2.2** Children baptised in the Catholic faith who have completed primary education at a school other than a Catholic primary school and who live in the designated region which the Catholic secondary school serves.
- 3.2.3** Children baptised in the Catholic faith from other regions where the designated school has no vacancies.
- 3.2.4** Siblings of other children already enrolled who are not baptised in the Catholic faith.
- 3.2.5** Children of other Christian Churches and other faith traditions who have completed primary education in a CEW primary school and who live in the designated region which the Catholic secondary school serves who, with their parents, respect and agree to support the Catholic mission of the school including the Religious Education it offers for their children.
- 3.2.6** Children who have completed primary education in a CEW primary school and who live in the designated region which the Catholic secondary school serves who, with their parents, respect and agree to support the Catholic mission of the school including the Religious Education it offers for their children.
- 3.2.7** Children of other Christian churches and faith traditions who have completed primary education in a Christian primary school or another faith based school and who live in the designated region which the Catholic secondary school serves who, with their parents, respect and agree to support the Catholic mission of the school including the religious education it offers for their children.
- 3.2.8** Families who have been committed to Catholic education for the entire Primary school education of their child will be given priority over families who have chosen Catholic education for the last year or couple of years of Primary school for a child.
- 3.2.9** Children of other Christian Churches and faith traditions who, with their parents, respect and agree to support the Catholic mission of the school including the religious education it offers for their children.
- 3.2.10** Children who, with their parents, respect and agree to support the Catholic mission of the school including the religious education it offers for their children.
- 3.2.11** Children with specific personal, educational and wellbeing needs, children from under represented groups in our school community.
- 3.2.12** Other considerations may include; a family association with the school and being the sibling or child of a past pupil. These considerations should not preclude other relevant factors being taken into consideration when determining which children will be offered enrolment.

3.3 Policy Guidelines

- 3.3.1 It is anticipated that a student enrolling at a CEW school will remain at the same school through the full sequence of year level programs offered by that school.
- 3.3.2 Schools will make every effort to ensure that the learning, well-being and spiritual needs of all students are paramount in decisions concerning enrolment and transfer.
- 3.3.3 The transfer of student between CEW schools, both at the end of the year and, where appropriate, during the course of the year, will be managed in a collaborative and supportive manner.
- 3.3.4 An appeals process is available for those who, after fully negotiating with the school in question, wish to challenge the principal's decision concerning enrolment of transfer (This process is outlined in Section 4 of this document).
- 3.3.5 A family's capacity to pay all or part of the school's fees will not be a criterion for enrolment (SSEB 4.9, 2013).
- 3.3.6 Academic, intellectual or physical capacity and behaviour criteria should not be used as part of the enrolment decision-making process. Our schools welcome families who wish to enrol a child with additional learning needs and will do everything possible to accommodate the child's needs. Principals will seek further advice from the Catholic Education Office Sandhurst if there are concerns about unjustifiable hardship on the school community should a particular child be enrolled (SSEB 4.5, 2013). Where students with special needs are enrolled, a support group coordinated by the Principal, or Principal's delegate, will meet with the family to examine the specific needs of the child and to determine the best enrolment arrangements for that child.
- 3.3.7 It is the baptismal right of a Catholic child to be educated within a Catholic school. Therefore, the faith commitment of the parents should not be used as criteria for enrolling a Catholic student in Catholic schools (SSEB 4.4, 2013).

4. APPEALS PROCESS

- 4.1 Appeals against a decision to decline enrolment shall be made to the **Chair of Catholic Education Wodonga Council (CEWC) within 14 days of receipt** of the letter declining enrolment, for consideration by the CEWC Executive committee who will act as an Enrolment Appeals Panel.
- 4.2 The Enrolment Appeals Panel is chaired by the Chair of CEWC and will be convened to consider the appeal and any supporting material provided. The Panel may decide that the original decision is to be maintained or the decision is to be reversed or that a place in the school will be offered to the student with particular conditions attached.
- 4.3 The CEWC Chair will communicate the decision to the parents/guardian of the student in writing, together with a statement of reasons within 14 days of receiving the appeal.
- 4.4 If the applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the Enrolment Appeals Panel, a further and final appeal may be made to the Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst within 14 days of receiving the notification from the Panel that the appeal was not successful. This Appeal should be in writing to the Director, with reasons provided for the Appeal.
- 4.5 The Director will establish an Enrolment Appeal Panel to investigate the appeal and to offer a recommendation as per Section 6 of the SSEB Enrolment Policy and Guidelines 2013.

5. ENROLMENT AND TRANSFER PROCESS

5.1 Beginning School:

- 5.1.1 All children enrolling in Foundation level must turn five on or before April 30 in the year they commence school.
- 5.1.2 All children enrolling in Foundation level require a school entry immunisation certificate.

5.2 Statement of Commitment to, &/or respect for, the Catholic faith:

- 5.2.1 All families must give a written commitment to respect and support the Catholic nature and practices of the schools. This includes participation in the formal religious education program and prayer life of each school.

5.3 Commitment to appropriate financial support for school of enrolment:

- 5.3.1 All families must give a written commitment to support the school financially. Normally this support would be through the full payment of school fees and levies as approved by Council. Where circumstances dictate that full payment will not be possible, the obligation remains on each family to support according to its means and to negotiate this with the relevant school Principal.

5.4 Student Transfer Process:

The following Process refers to requests for transfer between CEW schools at the end of the year and during the year. *This Process does not cover Transition from Year 6 to Year 7 (See CEW Transition Policy).*

Students who enrol at a CEW school at Year 6 after the February census will not be guaranteed enrolment at Catholic College in the following year. Refer to 3.2.8 above.

5.4.1 End of Year Transfer Process:

Families will be encouraged to finalise school transfers as close to the end of Term 3 as is possible. This will be achieved through the following:

- o Parents to notify the Principal of their child's current school regarding the student's intention to transfer. *Notification must be received by the end of Term 3.* Applications outside this timeframe will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- o As far as is possible, in early Term 4, a collaborative approach will be taken to the transfer of a student, including:
 - Discussion between the principals involved;
 - Recommendation to parents, who may not have already done so, that the matter be fully discussed with the Principal at their child's current school;

- Discretion and full consultation in the communication that each Principal has with the family in question;
 - The development and implementation of a mutually agreed plan for dealing with the request for transfer.
- o Where required, a clearly articulated support-plan will be developed and implemented to facilitate an effective transfer to the new school.

5.4.2 During the Year Transfer Process:

With the exception of the identified dates, the process for applications for transfer during the course of the normal school year will parallel the process outlined above for end of year transfers.

Communication:

Families will be notified of decisions regarding student enrolment and transfer by mail. A common notification format will be used across all CEW schools, which will include the CEWC letterhead.

Transfer Appeals Process:

The appeals process outlined in Section 4 above is available to parents and guardians.

6. POLICY EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed on a five yearly basis in line with the Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement School Review Process or in response to an identified and agreed need for review. The evaluation will be based on the Sandhurst School Education Board Enrolment Policy and Guidelines 2013.

6.1 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement (CoSSI)
- CEW Fee and Debt Collection Protocol 2016
- CEW Transition Policy 2014
- CEW Transition Timelines and Processes Guideline 2013
- CEW Parental Responsibility Guideline 2012

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