



# Enrolment Policy

*St. Joseph's School, Brunswick West*

## Rationale

St. Joseph's School welcomes all families wishing to provide their children a Catholic Education. St. Joseph's *Enrolment Policy* is consistent with the enrolment policy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, which states that:

*Catholic education is intrinsic to the mission of the Church. It is one means by which the Church fulfils its role in assisting people to discover and embrace the fullness of life in Christ. The Australian bishops established Catholic schools in the 1860s as a key instrument of catechesis and sacramental preparation for Catholic children. Catholic schools continue to offer a broad, comprehensive curriculum imbued with an authentic Catholic understanding of Christ and his teaching, as well as a lived appreciation of membership of the Catholic Church.*

## Aim of this Policy

Parents, as the first educators of their children, enter into a partnership with their Catholic school to promote and support their child's education, in particular their education in faith. Upon accepting an offer of enrolment for their child at St. Joseph's School, all parents/guardians agree to the expectations arising from this partnership.

The aim of this policy is:

- i. to assist prospective families to understand St Joseph's enrolment procedures
- ii. to assist prospective families to understand the responsibilities associated with accepting an offer of enrolment at St Joseph's School.
- iii. to ensure St. Joseph's School complies with the enrolment policy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Enrolments at St. Joseph's School will be considered in the following order of priority:

1. Catholic children who are residents of the parish.
2. Catholic children who do not reside in the parish but are recognised as parishioners by the Parish Priest.
3. Catholic children from other parishes (for pastoral reasons)
4. Children from non-Catholic Eastern churches who reside in the parish
5. Children from non-Catholic Eastern churches who reside outside the parish
6. Other Christian children who reside in the parish
7. Other Christian children who reside outside the parish
8. Non-Christian children who reside in the parish
9. Non-Christian children who reside outside the parish.

Note: - Siblings of children currently enrolled at St. Joseph's School will be given a priority.  
- Information on Parish boundaries is available on the school website.

When the number of children seeking enrolment exceeds the number of places available, names will be placed on a waiting list. However, recognising that Catholic schools have been established primarily for Catholic children, no baptised Catholic child residing in the parish will be excluded.

## **Exercise of pastoral discretion in enrolment decisions**

The St Joseph's parish priest and the principal of St Joseph's School may exercise pastoral discretion with respect to individual enrolment decisions.

## **Fees, Levies and Other Charges**

The setting of fee levels and other compulsory charges in Catholic primary schools is the responsibility of the school, taking into account the allocation of government funds. The school offers a number of methods for paying fees to reduce any financial burden and to assist financial planning. The fees must be paid for a child to enrol and to continue enrolment at the school. The school has discretion whether to allow a child to participate in optional or extracurricular school events, such as paid school excursions or extracurricular activities, while fees remain due and payable.

Fee concessions and exemptions will be granted to families who are genuinely unable to meet the fees. Exemptions will be reviewed at the commencement of each year. This is done by the School Principal and Parish Priest. Parents/guardians who are able, but are unwilling to meet their financial commitments will be made aware of their obligations, as a matter of justice to other families.

## **Conformity with Principles of the Catholic Faith**

As a provider of Catholic education, the school Principal will take into account the need for the school community to represent and conform with the doctrines, beliefs and principles of the Catholic faith when making decisions regarding matters of school administration, including enrolment. Pupils and families who are members of other faiths are warmly welcomed at our school. However, the school reserves its right to exercise its administrative discretion in appropriate circumstances, where it is necessary to do so to avoid injury to the religious sensitivities of the Catholic school community.

## **Acceptable Behaviour**

Every person at the school has a right to feel safe, to be happy and to learn, therefore we aim:

- to promote the values of honesty, fairness and respect for others;
- to acknowledge the worth of all members of the community and their right to work and learn in a positive environment;
- to maintain good order and harmony;
- to affirm cooperation as well as responsible independence in learning; and
- to foster self-discipline and to develop responsibility for one's own behaviour.

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 a child's enrolment, parents and guardians are expected to comply with the school's behaviour aims, 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 relationship between parent/guardian and school, may result in suspension or termination of the child's enrolment.

## Verification of Enrolment Application

At the discretion of the Parish Priest and Principal, verification of information provided on the Enrolment Application may be referred to an outside agency.

## Provision of Accurate Information

It is vitally important that the school is made aware of each child's individual circumstances insofar as these may impact upon his or her physical, functional, emotional or educational needs, particularly where the school is required to provide additional support to the child.

Parents and guardians must provide accurate and up to date information when completing an enrolment form and must supply the school, prior to enrolment, any additional information as may be requested, including copies of documents such as medical/specialist reports (where relevant to the child's schooling), reports from previous schools, court orders or parenting agreements. Provision of requested documentation is regarded as a condition of enrolment, and enrolment may be refused where a parent/guardian has unreasonably refused to provide requested information or knowingly withheld relevant information from the school.

Where, during the course of a child's enrolment, new information becomes available that is material to the child's educational and/or safety/wellbeing needs, it is a term of the child's continuing enrolment that such information is provided to the school promptly.

The provision of an inaccurate residential address or failure to provide an updated residential address for the child will also be treated as a breach of the terms of enrolment.

Once an enrolment has been accepted, all pertinent information is recorded on the enrolment register which is updated regularly by administration staff.

## Enrolment for Children with Additional Needs

The school welcomes parents/guardians who wish to enrol a child with additional needs and will do everything possible to accommodate the child's needs, provided that an understanding has been reached between the school and parents/guardians prior to enrolment regarding:

- the nature of any diagnosed or suspected medical condition/disability, or any other circumstances that are relevant to the child's additional learning needs (for example, giftedness or an experience of trauma);
- the nature of any additional assistance that is recommended/appropriate to be provided to the child (for example, medical or specialist equipment, specialist referrals, specific welfare support, modifications to the classroom environment or curriculum, aide assistance, individualised educational programs, behaviour support plans or other educational interventions as may be relevant);
- the individual physical, functional, emotional or educational goals that are appropriate to the child, and how the parents/guardians and the school will work in partnership to achieve these goals; and
- any limitations on the school's ability to provide the additional assistance requested.

The process for enrolling students with additional needs is otherwise the same as for enrolling any student.

As every child's educational needs can change over time, it will often be necessary for the school to review any additional assistance that is being provided to the child, in consultation with parents/guardians and the child's treating medical/allied health professionals, in order to assess:

- whether the additional assistance remains necessary and/or appropriate to the child's needs
- whether the additional assistance is having the anticipated positive effect on the child's individual physical, functional, emotional or educational goals
- whether it remains within the school's ability to continue to provide the additional assistance, given any limitations that may exist.

## Assessment and Updates

Various opportunities are provided during the year to let you know your child's progress. You will receive two written reports each year, and arrangements will be made for at least one interview where you can discuss your child's progress with the teacher. In addition, you can always contact the school to arrange a meeting with the teacher if you have concerns or wish to have an update on progress.

## Privacy

The School is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988. In relation to health records, the School is also bound by the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic.) and the Health Privacy Principles in that Act. For more information on Privacy, please see the *Privacy Policy* on the school website.

## Enrolment Procedure

It is to be noted that the submission of an application does not guarantee an interview/offer of a place.

### Foundation (Prep)

For a child to be eligible for enrolment consideration in Foundation, they must turn 5 years of age by April 30 of the year of entry to school. Foundation enrolment applications are accepted from the beginning of the school year prior to when a child is eligible to commence. An Open Day is held around *Catholic Education Week* (mid March), providing an opportunity for prospective families to learn more about St. Joseph's School. Applications for enrolment are due back to St. Joseph's by the end of Term 1. *Application for Enrolment* packs can be collected at the Open Day, or from the school office at other times.

Shortly after applications have closed, the Principal will notify all applicant families as to whether their application will be further considered or declined. Interviews with the Principal and their nominee will then be offered to those being further considered. These generally take place from late April to early June. The child and parents/guardians are all required to attend the interview.

At the conclusion of the interview period, a letter will be mailed to all interviewees, indicating the success or rejection of their application. Acceptances of an offer of a place are required to be returned by the end of second term.

### Year 1 to 6

An *Application for Enrolment* for children in Year 1 to 6 can be submitted all year round, however it should be noted that applications will be considered subject to existing class numbers, and a position may not be available at the time of application. In such cases, applicant families are welcome to request to be placed on a waiting list.

## Lodgement of Applications

Enrolment applications can only be made on the St Joseph's *Application for Enrolment* form and need to be accompanied by:

1. The child's baptism certificate.
2. The child's birth certificate or extract of birth entry.
3. The child's immunisation certificate.
4. A copy of any orders made by the Family Court concerning guardianship and/or custody of the child.
5. A copy of the entry visa for those who have recently arrived in Australia.
6. An original current rate notice or an original current phone/power bill to demonstrate parish residency.
7. A copy of the current passport or current drivers licence of one of the applicant's parents/guardians

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