

ENROLMENT POLICY

**Vision Statement - St Margaret's Primary School. Living our Catholic faith,
Engaging passionately in learning, Connecting and shaping our world**

1 RATIONALE

At St Margaret's we believe that "the parents are the first educators of their children and have the obligation and the right to ensure an adequate education for their children consistent with their rights and obligations and with their beliefs and values." (CEOM Policy 2.4)

As a Catholic Community in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, St Margaret's School offers, to the Catholic families of St Mary of the Angels' Parish, the opportunity to nurture and develop their faith within the context of a total education process.

St Margaret's School is committed to:

- Acknowledging and respecting the rights of all children to be provided with, and participate in, a quality education program creating an environment that supports, reflects and promotes equitable and inclusive behaviours and practices.
- Ensuring children are not discriminated against on the basis of background, ethnicity, culture, language, beliefs, gender, age, socioeconomic status, level of ability or additional needs, family structure or lifestyle.
- Creating a sense of belonging for all children, where diverse identities, backgrounds, experiences, skills and interests are respected, valued and given opportunities to be expressed/developed, ensuring that programs are reflective of, and responsive to, the values and cultural beliefs of families.
- Provide a Catholic education for all those who fulfil the enrolment criteria of the school.

2 ENROLMENT

You are required to provide particular information about your child during the enrolment process, both at the application stage and if the school offers your child a place. Please note that lodgement of the enrolment form does not guarantee enrolment at the school. If the information requested is not provided, we may not be able to enrol your child.

To meet school and government requirements, you will need to provide the school with a completed enrolment form including, among other things, the information listed below.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of your child's date of birth, e.g. birth certificate, passport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information about the language(s) your child speaks and/or hears at home
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • religious denomination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nationality and/or citizenship including the visa subclass granted upon entry to Australia (prior to citizenship being granted) where applicable

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> names and addresses of the child and parents/guardians; telephone numbers (home, work, mobile) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doctor's name and telephone number
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> names of emergency contacts and their details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> information on additional learning needs (e.g., support in relation to mobility, language, social skills development, welfare needs, challenging behaviours, adjustments to the curriculum, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific residence arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> parenting agreements or court orders, including any guardianship orders

After lodgement of this form, school staff may need to request further information, for example in relation to any parenting orders, medical conditions or additional learning needs that you have noted on the enrolment form. In addition, it is often useful for parents/guardians to attend a meeting with the principal and/or school staff prior to enrolment to discuss any additional needs your child may have. An interpreter may be organised, if required.

Subject to any special exercise of discretion by the priest and the principal, the following list provides an agreed order of priority for enrolment in our school, which is consistent with the enrolment policy for all Catholic schools.

After siblings the following applies

1. Catholic children who reside in the parish.
2. Catholic children who do not reside in but belong to the parish community
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.

3 CATCHMENT AREA FOR SCHOOLS

For the purpose of enrolment, the school catchment is the parish or group of parishes, as defined by Catholic Education Melbourne, from which the school draws the majority of its enrolments and to which the school gives priority of enrolment. In parishes with more than one primary school, the catchment for each school is determined by the parish in consultation with Catholic Education Melbourne. For the purpose of enrolment, relating to St Margaret's School, the parish is the St Mary of the Angles' Parish as defined by its geographical boundaries.

4 FEES

The setting of fee levels and other compulsory charges in Catholic schools is the responsibility of the school, taking into account the allocation of government funds. St Margaret's School offers a number of methods for paying fees to reduce any financial burden and to assist financial planning.

Measures which are deemed to gauge the faith commitment of parents on their ability to pay fees will not be used as criteria for enrolment. In the case of parents/guardians who are unwilling to pay fees after their child has been enrolled, every effort will be made to help the parents/guardians understand their obligations. Families experiencing hardship are invited to approach the Principal to discuss their circumstances and to arrange mutually satisfactory terms for payment. Requests for special terms must be negotiated each year.

5 ENROLMENT UNDER MINIMUM SCHOOL ENTRY AGE

Catholic Education Melbourne Enrolment for Schools Policy 2.4 is intended to ensure that, when enrolling students, Catholic schools are compliant with relevant Victorian and Australian government legislation. The minimum starting age for a child to be enrolled in a Victorian school is four years and eight months, i.e. a child must turn five by 30 April in the year of starting school. Enrolment of children under the minimum school entry age and pre-Prep programs require approval from Catholic Education Melbourne via the 'Application for Early Age Entry to School'.

In the rare situations where:

- a) a parent/guardian seeks enrolment of a child under the minimum starting age
- b) the principal supports the enrolment of that child at the school

The approval of the Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne is required before enrolment under the minimum starting age can occur. Approval for early age enrolment will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

6 CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Catholic school communities have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children are respected, their voices are heard, and where they are safe and feel safe.

Every person involved in Catholic education, including all parents at our school, has a responsibility to understand the importance and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

St Margaret's School's child safe policies, codes of conduct and practices set out our school's commitment to child safety, and the processes for identifying, communicating, reporting and addressing concerning behaviour and allegations of child abuse. These documents establish clear expectations for all staff and volunteers for appropriate behaviour with children in order to safeguard them against abuse.

Our school has established human resources practices where newly recruited staff, existing staff and volunteers in our school understand the importance of child safety, are trained to minimise the risk of child abuse, and are aware of our school's relevant policies and procedures. Our school also provides ongoing training, supervision and monitoring of staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children as part of our human resources practices.

Our school has, structured risk management processes that help establish and maintain a child safe environment, which involves consideration of possible broad-based risk factors across a wide range of contexts, environments, relationships and activities that children within our school engage in.

Our school, in partnership with families, ensures children and young people are engaged and are active participants in decision-making processes, particularly those that may have an impact on their safety. This means that the views of staff, children, young people and families are taken seriously and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner.

Our school's child safety policies and procedures are readily available and accessible. Further details on the Catholic education community's commitment to child safety across Victoria can be accessed by visiting:

- a) CECV - child safety page www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Our-Schools/Child-Safety
- b) CEM - child safety page www.cem.edu.au/Our-Schools/Choosing-a-School/Child-Safety.aspx.

7 TERMS OF ENROLMENT REGARDING ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

St Margaret's School is a community that exemplifies the gospel values of love, forgiveness, justice and truth. The school community recognises that everyone has the right to be respected, to feel safe and be safe; and, in this regard, understands their rights and acknowledges their obligation to behave responsibly.

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

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

The school Principal and Leadership team, 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 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.

8 TERMS OF ENROLMENT REGARDING CONFORMITY WITH PRINCIPLES OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH

As a provider of Catholic education, the principal will take into account the need for the school community to represent and comply with the doctrines, beliefs and principles of the Catholic faith when making decisions regarding matters of school administration, including enrolment. Students and families who are members of other faiths are warmly welcomed at our school. However, the school reserves the 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.

Enrolments of Non-Catholic Students

Non-Catholic students may be enrolled when the school has places available and at the discretion of the Parish Priest and the Principal.

- Parents of the non-Catholic child are acquainted with the nature and ethos of the Catholic School and must agree to their child receiving Religious Education and attending all Religious Celebrations held during school hours.
- Parents of non-Catholic children must understand that the enrolment of their child at St Margaret's school does not give them the automatic right of admission to a Catholic Secondary School.

9 TERMS OF ENROLMENT REGARDING 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 their 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.

10 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:

- a) the nature of any diagnosed or suspected medical condition/disability, or any other circumstances that are relevant to the child's additional learning needs (e.g. giftedness or an experience of trauma)
- b) the nature of any additional assistance that is recommended/appropriate to be provided to the child (e.g. medical or specialist equipment, specialist referrals, specific welfare support, modifications to the classroom environment or curriculum, aide assistance, individual education programs, behaviour support plans or other educational interventions as may be relevant)
- c) 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

- d) 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:

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

11 REPORTING, ASSESSMENT AND UPDATES

Accurate and comprehensive reporting of school and student performance aids in establishing open communication, helps to improve student learning and assists in establishing future direction.

St Margaret's School offers various opportunities for parents/guardians to keep up to date with their child's progress. You will receive two comprehensive written reports each year, and arrangements will be made for at least one interview where you can discuss your child's development with their teacher. In addition, you can always contact the school to arrange a meeting if you have any concerns or wish to receive an update on progress.

In cases of multi-household families, it is an expectation that one or both parents (as decided by the family) would attend the interview. Having both parents at the same interview ensures that the same information is simultaneously received by parents and teachers. St Margaret School encourages agreement between parents regarding their children's schooling.

Parent-School Relationship Code of Conduct: Available on the school website

Disclaimer: Personal information will be held, used and disclosed in accordance with the school's Privacy Collection Notice and Privacy Policy available on its website: www.smgeelongeast.com.au

EVALUATION: This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle.

Policy Dated: 24 May 2019