



Policy: Enrolment

This policy has been formulated with reference to two important documents:

1. CEOM Policy 2.4
'Enrolments for Schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne'
2. CEOM Policy 2.17
'Guidelines for the Enrolment of Year 7 students.... '

This Sacré Cœur enrolment policy, while informed by the above policies, is also written within the context of Sacré Cœur as an Independent School, operating as both a Catholic school within the wider Archdiocesan (CEOM) network and as a member school of the Independent Schools Network (ISV and AHISA in particular).

RATIONALE

The Sacré Cœur Enrolment Policy would share those sentiments expressed in the Rationale of the CEOM Policy 2.4:

'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 1860's 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.'

This CEOM Enrolment Policy establishes that the first priority of a Catholic school is the provision of a Catholic education for Catholic children. This reflects the historical context of Catholic education in Australia, as well as confirming the participation of the Catholic school in the Church's mission. As a result, formation and education in a Catholic school must be based on the principles of Catholic doctrine.

To support the view that Catholic schools are primarily for Catholic children, this policy and accompanying procedures establish an expectation that schools will work towards and/or maintain the highest possible level of Catholic enrolment. This policy also outlines the roles of the Catholic Education Office Melbourne (CEOM) and schools in working together to achieve this goal.'

THE AIMS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLING

Similarly Sacré Cœur's Enrolment Policy would support the aims of Catholic schooling as prefaced in CEOM Policy Document No. 2.17:

'As Catholics, we have a particular view of life based on fundamental beliefs concerned with the dignity and integral growth of the person, which generate attitudes such as:

- a freedom which includes respect for others
- a conscientious responsibility

- a sincere and constant search for truth
- a sensitivity for justice
- a special awareness of being called to be positive agents of change in a society that is undergoing continuous transformation'

SACRÉ CŒUR – SPECIAL CHARACTER

Sacré Cœur's enrolment policy is also drawn up with reference to the Five Goals of Sacred Heart Education which inform all school policies:

- 1 A personal and active faith in God
- 2 A deep respect for intellectual values
- 3 Building community as Christian value
- 4 A social awareness that impels to action
- 5 Personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom

It is these Five Goals, a contemporary re-expression of the original Plan of Studies of the founding Congregation, the Society of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ), which give the School that special sense of mission and charism which is derived from the Society.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Sacré Cœur has intakes at Prep, Year 5 and Year 7. Entry at other year levels is possible when casual vacancies arise.

Any enrolment once agreed to between School and home requires parents to convey their agreement (by signature) to the School's Business Regulations.

ENROLMENT TIMELINE

As an Independent School Sacré Cœur's enrolment timeline differs from the timelines adhered to by many parishes, congregational or regional Catholic schools. It is however a timeline consistent with all other Catholic Schools which are Independent and referred to by the CEOM as the 'exceptionally funded Catholic schools'.

Enrolments at the School's entry points are facilitated up to two years in advance.

Generally prospective Junior School students are enrolled through an interview process with the Head of Junior School and Year 7 to 12 applicants are interviewed by the Principal, with their parents in attendance.

EQUITY OF ACCESS

While the School aims to respond to each application on an equal basis, as 'the School may enrol at any time' this two year enrolment timeline may be extended. For example a family

travelling overseas or unable to attend at the usual time for interview, may have their application processed earlier should the School so decide.

THE PRIORITY OF CATHOLIC ENROLMENTS

As a Catholic School, Sacré Cœur shares the Archdiocesan priority of providing an education for Catholic students. However, as an Independent School, Sacré Cœur reserves the right to accept enrolments from students of other religions, denominations or other traditions.

PRIORITY FOR ADMISSION

The priorities for offering places will be determined in the following order:

- 1 Sisters of current or past students and daughters of permanent staff members
- 2 Daughters and granddaughters of alumnae
- 3 Daughters of Catholic families
- 4 Students of other religious traditions

To be considered in the appropriate priority grouping, applications must be submitted two years prior to the proposed entry date.

DATE OF ORIGINAL APPLICATION

Within each category above, offers are made on the basis of the date of application. All students must be prepared to come in for an enrolment interview when requested to do so, or to participate via e-communication, eg Skype.

DEFERRAL OR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Should a family defer enrolment, eg from Prep to Year 5 or from Year 5 to Year 7, such deferrals see applicants return to the pool of prospective applicants and they do not gain automatic priority in any subsequent application.

At times the School may agree to hold a place subject to a non-refundable holding fee of one term's fees per student being paid. The place/s will generally be held for two years; however a longer period may be negotiated with the School. A commitment to return must be made in writing six months prior or the place will lapse. The fee will be offset against the first fee billing on a student's return to school.

COMMITMENT TO NON-DISCRIMINATORY ENROLMENT PRACTICE

The School will not discriminate against a student's enrolment on the basis of disability, impairment or intellectual limitations.

Should any of the above considerations be relevant to any particular prospective applicant the school would:

- ask for documentary/medical evidence of the student's condition or need

- seek communication or documentation from the student's previous school to ascertain how the student has previously been provided for
- seek to clarify if the student will receive funding to enhance further the learning support offered to them (students with special/particular needs)
- conduct meeting or meetings with parents to gain a clear picture of the student's needs so that the School may deliver the parameters of the program it feels it is able to provide in the light of parents' hopes and wishes
- arrive at a mutual agreement with parents on the support/program to be offered by the school prior to commencement

OFFER OF ENROLMENT

The offer of a place at Sacré Cœur is dependent upon:

- payment of upfront fees as stipulated by school policy
- the family's acceptance of all school policies relating to pastoral care, student discipline, and the School's Catholic philosophy and values
- an understanding that the enrolling family:
 - is supportive and accepting of the School's Catholic ethos
 - is open to involvement in the School's community life
 - will be asked to consider support of any capital appeals the School conducts during the enrolment period

A RE-STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S INDEPENDENCE IN ENROLMENT MATTERS

As an Independent School, Sacré Cœur's fee schedule inevitably falls into the high fees bracket.

It is sadly not possible for a student to stay enrolled in the School if the fees are not paid or a mutually agreed arrangement is not reached. In the event of such an agreement not being reached within a reasonable time frame, the School Board reserves the right to cancel a student's enrolment. The payment of school fees is outlined in the school's Business Regulations document which should be read in consultation with this general enrolment policy.

The School supports the tenet that all Catholic students have a right to a Catholic education. Given the financial realities of Sacré Cœur's structure which relies on 70% of its income from the parents' paid tuition fees, should financial difficulties persist, the School will offer every assistance to families who need help in finding a more affordable Catholic education option.

This policy response concerning unpaid school fees is also written in consideration and support of those parents who do pay their fees and who do so, sometimes at times of real financial strain and commitment.

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