St Joseph’s Primary School

DUNGOG

Enrolment Policy

Last Reviewed 2012  Next Review 2015
RATIONALE:


St Joseph’s Primary School acknowledges the Church’s exhortation to Catholic parents to send their children to Catholic schools whenever possible. It accepts the responsibility on the part of Catholic education authorities to ensure that quality Catholic education is provided at our school.

This Enrolment Policy reflects the Diocesan Vision Statement especially those values which:

- Promote the partnership of home, parish and school, and recognise the family as the primary focus of the educational process
- Recognise the individuality of each young person, and foster the development of each one’s unique potential and spirituality
- Develop a challenging, authentic and inclusive educational environment that encourages lifelong learning.

This policy provides guidelines for the enrolment, where possible, of children from Catholic families.

In this Policy Catholic families are defined as:

_Families in which a parent is a Catholic and in which the children to be enrolled have been baptised Catholics._

AIMS:

St Joseph’s aims to establish a common, consistent approach to enrolment by

- providing enrolment, where possible, for all Catholic children who seek enrolment
- catering for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources
- encouraging parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in the Faith.
IMPLEMENTATION:

Establishment of an Enrolment Committee

School Enrolment Committee (Appendix A) is to be responsible for the implementation of this policy. In all enrolment issues, the discretionary authority of the School Enrolment Committee is assumed, in keeping with established Diocesan Guidelines.

Operation of Enrolment Committees

School Enrolment Committee shall consist of:

- The Parish Priest.
- The Principal
- The Religious Education Coordinator (as required)

The enrolment committee will interview all new families who seek enrolment which will be convened by the Principal and in accordance with the Guidelines for Enrolment Committees that are published by the Catholic Schools Board.

Bases of Discretion

School Enrolment Committees need to give consideration to the logistical problems which may arise and to the granting of discretionary power to principals in matters of pupil transfers and incidental applications.

Mandatory Provisions

To facilitate parental understanding of the ideals and principles upon which the Catholic school is based (Vision Statement for Catholic Schools) individual schools will conduct appropriate orientation procedures for parents seeking to enrol their children. Participation by families in the life of the school and their parish should be encouraged. Schools will be required to comply with the enrolment procedures published by the Catholic Schools Office.

Children from all families supportive of Catholic ideals may be considered eligible for enrolment. Priority is given to children from Catholic families who are actively involved in the parish community/communitys upon which the school depends and to children in the catechumen program.

In cases of poverty, disability or special needs, a child should be given special consideration. Refer to Support Material No.1, Guidelines for the Operation of School Enrolment Committees and the Diocesan Process for the Enrolment of Students with Special Needs 1999 and Guidelines for Early Entry to
Primary/Secondary Schools in Policy on Education of Gifted and Talented Children 1995 and the (Disabilities Discrimination Act 1992). (Consideration may be given to Partial Integration as a desired option in special cases.)

Enrolment into Kindergarten is not guaranteed.

Full-fee Paying Overseas Students are enrolled in accordance with Catholic Education Commission requirements and the Support Material No.2, General Enrolment Information for Committees.

It is expected that Catholic students would normally make up 90% or more of the enrolment of the school.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing and given reasons for the application being rejected. Appeals against the decision of the School Enrolment Committee shall be made firstly to the School Enrolment Committee, then to the Director of Schools at the Catholic Schools Office.

**Procedures for Enrolment**

Procedures for enrolment are set out in the *Support Material, General Enrolment Information for Committees*, and from time to time in the Director’s Bulletin in conformity with this policy.

The enrolment period for Catholic schools of the Diocese is determined by the Catholic Schools Office.

The enrolment period will be advertised at the appropriate time in the wider media as well as the Director’s Bulletin and the Aurora. Parish Priests must be notified at the appropriate time and requested to make announcements from the pulpit and to include appropriate notices in the parish bulletins and newsletters. Enrolment posters for display in parish churches and schools are provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

The provision of Monthly Enrolment Returns from each school to the Catholic Schools Office will continue for monitoring purposes.

All schools will be supplied with copies of the Diocesan Enrolment Application forms.
ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

When a student with Special Needs seeks enrolment at St Joseph’s, the enrolment committee will need to refer to the Enrolment Guidelines for Students with Disabilities. These guidelines are updates annually and available on the CSO website mn.catholic.edu.au/go/documents

- The Enrolment Guidelines outlines the process to be followed when enrolling students with Special Needs.

- All applications must be first assessed by members of the Student Support Unit. This process must be followed once all general enrolment criteria, as stated in the Enrolment Policy, have been met.

BUDGET:

Schools will allocate funds for documentation costs.

EVALUATION:

This policy will be evaluated as per the school’s Policy Review Timeline, or prior to this in response to student or community needs.
GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF SCHOOL ENROLMENT COMMITTEES

School Enrolment Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of the Diocesan Enrolment Policy.

- The Principal and Parish Priest (or his delegate) are ex officio members of the Committee.
- The School Enrolment Committee is convened by the Principal.
- All new families to the Parish, School, Diocese who seek enrolment for their child/children should be interviewed.

In considering applications from students with special needs or disabilities, Enrolment Committees are guided by the Diocesan Process for the Enrolment of Students with Special Needs 1999, which requires that such applications be first assessed by members of the Counselling and Special Education Teams. After consultation with Counselling and Special Education personnel and parents, the School Enrolment Committee will make a decision regarding enrolment. The Committee may prefer to leave to the Principal the detailed discussion and negotiation involved in these cases.

Catholic families are defined as families in which a parent is a Catholic and in which the children to be enrolled have been baptised Catholics.

The provision concerning an acceptable percentage of other Christian denominations students is a guideline only. Local circumstances may suggest or require a departure from this percentage. As a general rule the number of other Christian denominations accepted in primary school will be minimal.

The primary focus of the Enrolment Policy is to cater for students of Catholic families who participate in the life and worship of the Parish and who are prepared to support Catholic ideals and principles.
Appendix 2
Order of Preference

- Should distinction in potential enrolments be required, a consideration of the following order of preference for primary schools is recommended:

- Families of the Parish who are known and involved members of the Parish.

- Families of other Parishes who are known and involved members of their own Parish but who have particular needs, which can be best met in this school.

- Families of the Parish who participate irregularly in the life and worship of the Parish.

- Families committed to a Christian denomination who want a Catholic education and who currently have or have had children within the Catholic system and were totally supportive of the school.

- Families who are Catholic but do not participate in Parish life.

- Families of other Christian denominations who want a religious education for their children and who regularly participate in their own denominational life.

- Families who nominally belong to other religious denominations and who are open to the possibilities offered by a Catholic school.

- Families who have no religious affiliation but who are open to the possibilities offered by a Catholic school.
Appendix 3:

GENERAL ENROLMENT INFORMATION FOR COMMITTEES

Each year a Circular is sent to schools in preparation for the Enrolment period for the following year. The information is provided below. The following are the details regarding enrolment procedures for new pupils for the next school year. While the procedures specifically address enrolments in Kindergarten and Year Seven, they have a general application in respect of enrolments in other years.

THE ENROLMENT PERIOD

The enrolment period for all new pupils will open at the commencement of Term Two.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ENROLMENT PERIOD

Publicity will be given to the enrolment period in two ways:
(a) Parish Priests are being asked to make mention of the enrolment period in parish bulletins / pulpit notices leading up to enrolment.
(b) Advertisements will appear in all major newspapers circulating in the Diocese in the week preceding the opening of the enrolment period. In addition, principals are asked to publicise the enrolment period in any circulars forwarded to parents prior to or during the commencement of the enrolment period.
ENROLMENT IN KINDERGARTEN

The regulations regarding enrolments in Kindergarten are as follows:

There is one intake into Kindergarten each year and this is at the beginning of first term.

To be eligible for enrolment in Kindergarten, pupils must celebrate their fifth birthday on or before May 31 of the year in which their parents seek enrolment for them.

Where parents request the enrolment of children who turn five after May 31, an exemption from the age limit is to be preceded by an assessment of the child’s readiness for school. This assessment is to be made by the principal, or the principal's delegate, at an interview with parents at which the child is present, prior to a meeting with the Enrolment Committee. Principals remain free to recommend for or against the exemption.

From the commencement of the 2012 school year, each newly enrolled Kindergarten student undertook the “Best Start” Kindergarten Assessment prior to commencing the school term. The assessment was completed by the appropriately trained Kindergarten teacher.

ACTION REGARDING ENROLMENTS

Principals of primary schools are asked to take the following action, where appropriate:

- Advise the Parish Priest of details of enrolment procedures for Kindergarten pupils for (year) so that they can be included in parish bulletins/pulpit notices over the (date) weekend.

- Distribute enrolment forms for Year 7 …..(year) to parents of Year 6 pupils, together with the accompanying “ADMISSION TO YEAR 7( year)”, in the last week of Term 1. Forms and other information for distribution will be forwarded on ……(date).

- Receive all completed Year 7 enrolment forms, including any out-of-zone applications and forward them to the principal of the appropriate zoned high school as soon as possible. It would be appreciated if all forms could be forwarded to the relevant high school as soon as possible after .....(date)
APPLICATION FORM

- The standard form entitled APPLICATION FOR ENROLMENT IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE should be used. All applications for enrolment from Kindergarten to Year 12 are to be on this standard form. A copy of the Baptismal Certificate must be attached to the enrolment form unless the student is currently enrolled in a Diocesan school.

- In the case of non-Catholic students seeking enrolment, it is necessary to attach a copy of the Birth Certificate or equivalent document to the enrolment form. An equivalent document would be a Baptismal Certificate showing date of birth.

- In the case of non-Catholic students from Government schools seeking enrolment, and students seeking out-of-zone enrolments, a summary of the reasons for the request should be attached.
ENROLMENT OF OVERSEAS STUDENTS

(a) Given the current complex regulations which govern the conditions under which overseas students may seek enrolment into Australian schools, principals are to refer all such applications to their school consultant. Enrolments must not be approved until this is done.

(b) In making such referrals, principals must sight the applicant's passport and forward a photocopy identifying the appropriate visa status under which the applicant is permitted to enter Australia. The time period specified on a visa is critical and students must not be enrolled for any period not specifically included on a visa.

(c) Principals may not guarantee to any person that enrolment of an overseas student will be effected upon their taking up residence in Australia.

(d) If the student seeking enrolment has a Student Visa, special procedures need to be followed. These students (previously FFPOS) are not eligible for State or Commonwealth recurrent funding and are liable for normal school fees plus full cost recovery fees plus any ESL tuition required. (See School Package available on request from Assistant Director)

N.B. For ESL costs and or support to families contact ‘Teaching and Learning Services’

GUIDELINES FOR EARLY ENTRY AND ENROLMENT OF GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS