CATHOLIC SPECIAL SCHOOLS Inc.

ENROLMENT POLICY

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the school’s Vision Statement and other current policies at the school. The procedures complement but are different from the Catholic Education SA New Enrolment and Support Procedures.

Catholic Special Schools provide educational and pre-vocational training for students with intellectual disabilities. While students from various religious denominations attend the school, all parents are required to support the Catholic ethos, which includes all students participating in the religious education program.

The minimum entry age for students is five years. After participating in the school's transition to post-school program, students graduate at the end of the school year that they turn twenty years of age. Depending on their circumstances, students may graduate once they reach the age of 17 years of age. Should such a situation arise this will occur in liaison with the student’s parents.

In collaboration with parents and families, the overall aim of our educational programs is to support students to develop to their full potential and to prepare them to lead a happy, meaningful life. Our curriculum has a strong emphasis on supporting students to develop independence and life skills. Where possible Catholic Special Schools offer the option of school bus transport before and after school within a limited geographical area.

Criteria for lodging an enrolment are:
- Parents are seeking a Catholic/Christian Education for their child
- Documentation confirming that the student has an intellectual disability

Enrolment will be considered when:
- There is a vacancy appropriate to the age of the student
- The student’s needs can be met within the school setting.

Priority is given to the following:
- Students are currently enrolled in other Catholic schools and require a Special School placement
- Students whose siblings are attending Catholic Schools.
- Parents have already made an application for enrolment in a Catholic School but a special school placement is deemed to be more appropriate for the child.
- Catholic families seeking a Catholic education for their child.

As a final level of discernment, the Principal, in consultation with the child’s parents and relevant professional advisers will determine whether the student’s needs can be accommodated within the context of the school. Consideration will be given to the number of students with significant or complex needs and extreme behaviours within the proposed classroom setting.
ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

1. The Principal meets with the parents and establishes that the application meets the school’s normal enrolment criteria.

2. The Principal ensures the application for enrolment is processed along with accompanying information about the student from relevant agencies and indicates to parents when a vacancy may become available.

3. If an appropriate placement cannot be offered at Catholic Special Schools, discussion will occur between the Principal and the parents regarding possible alternative placements.

4. In the event of a vacancy being unavailable at the time of the enrolment application by the parents, the student’s name will be placed on a waiting list.

5. The Principal communicates with parents annually to ensure the school is kept up to date about the student and his/her enrolment status.

6. When a place becomes available, the principal contacts the family, confirms the student’s needs in their current educational setting and where it is decided these needs can be met, offers a place.

7. The final decision regarding placement of a student is the prerogative of the Principal.

8. The parents will be asked to sign a consent form regarding the release of the information.

9. The Principal will consult with the child’s parents and with the following professionals:
   - The Principal/Director in the student’s current educational setting.
   - The Special Education Consultant in the region.
   - Personnel from appropriate agencies.
   - Other professionals who are closely involved with the student.

10. Once an enrolment has been confirmed, the Principal and delegated staff members will visit the student in his/her current educational setting and in collaboration with parents, agency and current educational setting staff, arrange for an appropriate transition program.

11. In order to provide the best possible programs for each student, collaboration between the parents and Principal is of utmost importance. Parents are expected to make an ongoing commitment in terms of general communication with the school.

12. Parents are expected to contribute financially towards their son or daughter’s educational costs each year. These costs are reviewed yearly by the Board of Management. In situations of financial hardship, fee reductions will be negotiated confidentially with the Principal.

13. Whilst sensitive to the pressures of work and family commitments, parents are encouraged to network with other parents at the school. This is possible through attending school meetings and parent workshops, social gatherings, and supporting fund raising events.

14. The school recognises the importance of respite care for families of students with a disability. However school staff may not enter into formal or informal respite arrangements with families.
15. Catholic Special Schools offer the option of school bus transport within a limited geographical area. If the student’s home is not within this vicinity, parents will need to meet the bus at an agreed location or make their own transport arrangements. The policy regarding school buses outlines due processes which will be followed if a student misbehaves on a school bus causing safety problems for others.