

ENROLMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

*The Currajong School takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all **Child Safe Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 870 (2015)***

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) has established minimum standards in relation to *Student Enrolment Numbers, Enrolment Policies and Enrolment Registers*.

RATIONALE

Currajong is an independent specialist school catering for primary school aged students who require special education provision for a diagnosed social, emotional or behavioural problem. The school offers an alternative educational program for students who have difficulty in engaging in mainstream school. The Currajong program prescribes attendance for approximately three years, with the option of reduced or increased enrolment in consultation with the Principal. The minimum age for enrolment is six years.

This policy is consistent with all applicable State and Commonwealth laws including the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)*, the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 (Vic.)*, the *Privacy Act* and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008)*.

PURPOSE

1. To detail the process for determining eligibility for students.
2. To articulate enrolment procedures
3. To ensure transition in and out of the school is successful with orientation opportunities based on individual needs for eligible students, parents/guardians/caregivers and their families.

Student information is treated confidentially and managed in accordance with Victorian privacy laws and legislation relating to immunisation.

POLICY

Enrolment procedure overview:

Initial contact: Principal conducts an interview and school tour for parents/guardians/caregivers. The Handbook and application form are provided.

Request for enrolment: Parents/guardians/caregivers complete the application form and contact the Business Manager to arrange a meeting with the student.

School tour: The child and parents/guardians/caregivers attend a student-focussed interview with the Principal and Assistant Principal. Parents/guardians/caregivers provide all completed paperwork and any additional reports as requested.

Enrolment decision: The Principal and Assistant Principal assess the student's eligibility and capacity to benefit from the program.

Communicating the outcome:

1. If the student is considered eligible for enrolment, the Principal will advise the parents/guardians/caregivers whether the placement is available immediately or the child's name is to be put on the waiting list. A date for the induction process is agreed upon – this will be prior to the student's commencement date.
2. If the student is considered ineligible, the Principal will advise the parents/guardians/caregivers and communicate the grounds for the decision.

1. Eligibility

The eligibility criteria for enrolment are as follows:

Severe Emotional Disorder

Children who require special education provision as well as psychiatric or psychological treatment or monitoring in relation to the social, emotional and behavioural problems they are experiencing.

Age

Children should be at least 5 years of age and under 14 years of age during their placement at Currajong. They should be no older than 11 years of age at the time of enrolment.

Intellectual Ability

Children need to be functioning within or above the normal range of intelligence (as measured on a standardised test), in order to be able to benefit from the programs offered at Currajong. As the level of intelligence may be difficult to determine in very young children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, such children may be referred on to a more appropriate school placement following periodic review.

Prognosis for Change

There should be positive indicators of children's ability to sustain changes made and to reintegrate into mainstream education following placement at Currajong.

Support and participation

Placement is full-time over a three-year period, which may be extended according to individual need, and is dependent on the age of the child upon enrolment.

Parents/guardians/caregivers/ are required to agree in writing to comply with all school policies and procedures. This includes: timely payment of fees; regular participation in school meetings, such as Student Support Groups and Parent-Teacher; regular communication with staff; advice of new or changing medication; regular sessions with the child's personal psychologist or psychiatrist.

2. Enrolment procedures

Enquiries and referrals may come from child and family agencies, medical and mental health professionals as well as directly from families. Children may also be referred from Government, Catholic and Independent schools or from pre-schools. Parents/guardians/caregivers are invited to contact the school to arrange an initial interview.

When an interview is offered, both parents/guardians/caregivers are required to attend. The process includes information about Currajong's programs, a short tour of the school, and a discussion with parents/guardians/caregivers about the child's history and presenting problems. All relevant professional reports need to be provided. Parents/guardians/caregivers may wish to also invite a professional involved with the child or a supportive friend or family member.

A statement from a psychiatrist or psychologist confirming the need for a specialist education placement - as well as the need for regular treatment or monitoring - is required prior to commencement at Currajong, in order to comply with Australian Government funding criteria. A proforma is provided to parents/guardians/caregivers for this purpose.

A certificate of immunisation status is required to indicate whether students have been immunised against some or all these infectious diseases: hepatitis, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, haemophilus influenza type B, pneumococcal, rotavirus, measles, mumps, rubella, meningococcal, chickenpox. Children who have not been immunised are instructed to be kept at home for the recommended period as outlined in the *Department of Health's School Exclusion Table*.

An enrolment is determined to be appropriate once the professional reports and parent interview have been completed and determined to meet the eligibility criteria (above). An offer of enrolment will be made by the Principal. At this point, a non-refundable administration fee is required in order to finalise enrolment. Note: children may commence at Currajong at any time during the school year subject to availability of a place.

The Currajong School maintains a Register of Enrolments that contains all information as required by the VRQA, including:

- Student name
- Student birth date
- Student address
- Name and contact details of parents/guardians/caregivers/guardians/caregivers
- Date of enrolment
- Date enrolment ceased

Student Background Characteristics Data is also collected at the time of enrolment and reviewed periodically.

Following a confirmed enrolment, a representative of The Currajong School may arrange to visit the child's current school to observe the student. Prior to entering the

school, the student and family will participate in an orientation program designed to suit the child's needs.

A Student Support Group (SSG) meeting will be conducted within the first month of enrolment to establish the student's personal, social and academic goals. These inform the student's Individual Learning Program (ILP).

Parents/guardians/caregivers/guardians/caregivers and external therapists are welcome to attend the SSG.

3. TRANSITION INTO SCHOOL

Completion of an *Application for Enrolment* and a signed agreement undertaking to comply with *Conditions of Entry* is required as follows:

Payment of a non-refundable administration fee. All fees and levies shall be payable prior to commencement of the child's first term. Unless the School Board determines otherwise, the student may not be permitted to attend school if such fees and levies are outstanding without explanation.

A full term's notice in writing to the Principal is required in the event of withdrawal of a student from the school. Otherwise payment of a full term's fees is required.

The *Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Agreement* has been completed and signed by both parents/guardians/caregivers/guardians/caregivers.

The transition process is individually designed to cater for each child's particular needs. A holistic approach to the induction process takes into consideration all aspects of the child's previous schooling: strengths and challenges, attendance rate, maximum time of successful learning, academic and behavioural ability.

When a student has been allocated to a class, the teacher will meet with the parents/guardians/caregivers/guardians/caregivers regularly to determine an effective and successful transition into school. This may mean the child commences on shortened hours, with time increased in recognition of positive achievement and sense of confidence.

DISPUTED PARENTAL CONSENT

In situations where there is disputed parental consent in relation to enrolments, parents/guardians/caregivers or guardians are responsible for providing the Principal with up-to-date information and documentation relating to relevant court orders or informal arrangements that are in place.

It is required that both parents/guardians consent to the enrolment and sign the enrolment form. When parent consent is disputed, the Principal will always act in accordance with the best interests of the student and the school community. Parental responsibility falls equally to both parents, considering any court orders, which may include a Parenting Order, a Family Violence Protection Order or a Protection Order.

Should decisions need to be made that relate to a long-term issue about the care, welfare and development of the child then the following persons can make these decisions:

- The person with 'parental responsibility' for 'major long-term issues'.
- The person who has 'guardianship' of the child.
- The person who has been given responsibility for this decision pursuant to a Court Order or Parenting Plan.

Should a decision relate to other issues about the care, welfare and development of the child then the following persons can make decisions on the child's behalf:

- The person with 'parental responsibility' who is spending time with the child at the particular time.
- The person who has 'custody' of the child.
- The person who is the 'carer' of the child.

See: DET School Policy & Advisory Guide (2016) Decision Making Responsibility for Students.

EVALUATION

This procedure will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next Review:
February 2020	School Board	February 2023