# ENROLMENT POLICY

The Academy of Mary Immaculate (the College) is a College which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Mercy Education Ltd (MEL).

As a College in the Mercy tradition:

- prayer and liturgy are vital aspects of the faith life of the College
- the pastoral care and support programs for students, families and staff are based on the teachings of the Catholic Church
- the teachings and values of the Catholic Church are paramount.

## Principles

Inclusiveness

Mercy Education Limited (MEL) Colleges are established primarily for Catholic children. The College strives to be open and welcoming to all Catholic students, regardless of their background, and does everything reasonable to accommodate each student's individual needs.

The College is open to the enrolment of children of other Christian traditions and faiths, however, priority will be given to children from non-Catholic Eastern churches. Children from other religious traditions or of no religion are provided with an opportunity to enrol should they choose to apply and there is sufficient capacity within the College.

Partnership between parents/guardians/carers and the College

Parents/guardians/carers are the first educators of their children. By enrolling a child at the College, parents/guardians/carers are entering into a partnership to promote and support their child's education, in particular their education in faith. While the College promotes access to a Catholic education through the College enrolment policy, it is the parent/guardian/carers' responsibility to support the College in furthering the spiritual and academic life of their child.

Exercise of pastoral discretion in enrolment decisions

Local pastoral discretion is an important element of decision-making with regard to enrolment at the College. While the first priority of the Principal is to enrol the children of Catholic parents/guardians/carers, pastoral discretion may be exercised in enrolment decisions, where deemed appropriate.

## Priority enrolment

There is an agreed order of priority for enrolment in MEL schools, which must be followed in the enrolment policy and procedures. The first priority of Catholic schools is the provision of a Catholic education for Catholic children.

The order of priority is:

1. Catholic children who are residents of a designated priority parish and have attended a Catholic primary school in one of those parishes
2. siblings of children already enrolled in the College
3. Catholic children who are residents of a designated priority parish and have not attended a Catholic primary school
4. Catholic children from other parishes (for pastoral reasons)
5. children from non-Catholic Eastern churches (i.e. Greek Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Ukrainian Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox and other Orthodox) who have attended a Catholic primary school and are residents of a priority parish

6. children from non-Catholic Eastern churches (i.e. Greek Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Ukrainian Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox and other Orthodox) who have not attended a Catholic primary school and are residents of a priority parish
7. other Christian children who have attended a Catholic primary school and are residents of a priority parish
8. other Christian children who have not attended a Catholic primary school and are residents of a priority parish
9. non-Christian children who have attended a Catholic primary school and are residents of a priority parish
10. non-Christian children who have not attended a Catholic primary school and are residents of a priority parish.

## Definitions

**Catholic child** - For the purpose of enrolment in a Catholic College, a child is considered to be Catholic if they are a member of the Catholic Church, usually established by a Certificate of Baptism and have fully participated in a sacramental program or, there is evidence of an intention to complete their sacramental journey.

A **Catholic College** operated by MEL is one which operates with the consent of the Archbishop of Melbourne, where formation and education are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine.

The **enrolment catchment area** is a defined area from which a College enrols students as officially designated to a College by MACS. For secondary Colleges, this is those parishes designated as priority parishes by MACS.

**Orthodox child** - For the purpose of enrolment in a Catholic College, a child is considered to be Orthodox if they are a member of a non-Catholic Eastern church, including Greek Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Ukrainian Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox and other Orthodox.

**'Parish**' refers to the local parish as defined by its geographical boundaries and student location is based on home address.

**Priority parishes** determine the secondary Colleges where a child would be given enrolment priority. Priority parish refers to the student's residential address, not the primary school attended by the student.

## Priority Parishes

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| • Our Lady Help of Christians School | Brunswick East |
| • St Margaret Mary's School | Brunswick North |
| • St Joseph's School | Brunswick West |
| • St Bernard's School | Coburg East |
| • St Joseph's School | Collingwood |
| • Sacred Heart School | Fitzroy |
| • St Joseph's School | Northcote |
| • Sacred Heart School | Preston |
| • St Raphael's School | Preston West |
| • Trinity Catholic School | Richmond |
| • Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School | South Melbourne |
| • St Mary's School | Thornbury |
| • St Mary's School | Williamstown |

## Parental/Guardian/Carer Responsibilities

At the time of enrolment at the College, parents/guardians/carers make a commitment to provide ongoing support for their child's Catholic education. In particular, parents/guardians/carers are asked to make an explicit commitment to the following responsibilities:

- complete the College's enrolment form and ensure it is returned by the due date. This does not guarantee enrolment in the College
- be prepared to support the College in the Catholic education of their child and involve themselves as much as possible
- acknowledge and commit to meeting the financial responsibilities arising from the ongoing enrolment of their child at the College. Any difficulties in meeting this commitment should be discussed with the Principal
- advise the Principal of any court order/s that may exist in relation to their child, or any changes to such order/s, and provide a copy of the court order/s and any subsequent changes for the child's College file
- provide the College with an immunisation history statement.

## Termination of enrolment

Parents/Guardians/Carers are, as a condition of enrolment, expected to read and comply with the MEL Parent/Guardian/Carer Code of Conduct (Code of Conduct).

In certain limited circumstances a termination of enrolment may occur where the relationship between the College and a family has irretrievably broken down as a result of significant and/or repeated breaches by a parent/guardian/carer of the College's Code of Conduct.

The termination of enrolment on the basis of parental/guardian/carer conduct must be approved by the Principal, and such approval would only be provided in the following circumstances:

- a breach of the MEL Parent Code of Conduct on the part of a parent/guardian/carer has previously occurred
- the parent/guardian/carer has, because of that previous breach, been warned that any subsequent breach of the MEL Parent Code of Conduct by them (or the family) may result in a termination of enrolment
- a further breach of the MEL Parent Code of Conduct by the parent/guardian/carer, or by another family member in appropriate circumstances (including where the Principal is satisfied on reasonable grounds that that other family member has been warned or is otherwise aware that a warning has previously been given) occurs.
- A termination of enrolment may also occur where any parent/guardian/carer has engaged in conduct on a single occasion which constitutes a serious breach of the Parent/Guardian/Carer Code of Conduct (involving for example, conduct which poses a serious risk to staff or student health and safety). In these circumstances, it will not be necessary for a warning to be given before consideration is given to termination of enrolment.
- a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation between the parents/guardians/carers and the College or any of its staff has broken down to the extent that it adversely impacts on the College, any of its staff or the ability of the College to provide satisfactory educational services to the student
- circumstances exist whereby the ongoing enrolment of the student at the College is untenable or is not in the best interests of the student or the College
- if any accounts or fees payable by the parents/guardians/carers are not paid within the College's terms of payment or within the terms of any written agreement between the College and the parents/guardians/carers permitting a later or deferred payment

Termination of enrolment - student behaviour

- the student's behaviour, attitude or conduct to schoolwork, other school activities or while attending the College is considered unsatisfactory
- on grounds of the student's unsatisfactory conduct or performance or for misconduct
- the student fails to obey the College's Policies and Procedures

- the student's progress and performance is such that, the student is not benefiting from the academic courses provided by the College

A decision to withdraw or terminate the enrolment of a student may only be made by the Principal, upon consideration of the following:

- the view of the Principal of the College
- an objective assessment of all presenting circumstances, including the nature and gravity of the conduct and whether any previous warnings have been provided to the parent/guardian/carer.

## Information to be Collected

The College is required to collect and retain particular information about parents/guardians/carers and their child. Parents/guardians/carers are required to provide particular information about their child during the enrolment procedure in order for the College to meet its duty of care obligations and to satisfy government requirements. Lodging an enrolment form does not guarantee enrolment at the College.

## Relevant Legislation

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.)
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

| Version | Author | Description of Changes | Release Date | Review Date | Approval |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | Paul Finneran | Enrolment Policy | December 2017 | December 2019 | Leadership team |
| 1.1 | Andrew Baker | Policy rewrite | December 2019 | December 2022 | Leadership team |
| | Andrew Baker | No changes | December 2022 | December 2024 | Leadership team |
| | Andrew Baker | No changes | December 2024 | December 2026 | Leadership team |
| | Andrew Baker | Priority parishes updated | April 2026 | April 2028 | Leadership team |