



## Enrolment Policy and Procedures – Secondary

Document Number: 01032025

Mercy Regional College operates with the consent of the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat and is operated and governed by the Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL).

### Policy Statement

This Policy and its accompanying Procedures set out the principles and requirements:

- for families of prospective students who are seeking to enrol a child at Mercy Regional College
- that comply with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) requirements in relation to the management of the enrolment process
- in accordance with the Enrolment Policy and Procedures for DOBCEL Schools.

Mercy Regional College is:

- inclusive and welcoming to all students and their families from diverse backgrounds who share and support the philosophy, values and aims of Catholic schooling
- committed to accommodating each student's individual requirements, within the boundaries of the school's available resources.

### Context

Mercy Regional College aims to:

- embrace the mission of the Church by welcoming all students and families who share our vision and educational philosophy
- be authentically Catholic and faithful to the mission of the Catholic Church and thereby has a particular responsibility to provide access to education to children baptised in the Catholic faith
- provide a clear and transparent enrolment process for families
- ensure the procedures for enrolment to the school are fair, transparent and inclusive
- engage families and carers as partners in their child's education process and the life of the school in an atmosphere of co-responsibility and co-accountability
- maintain a school culture that is safe and promotes the development of Catholic faith and values
- promote a Catholic education framework and a learning environment where students are educated and nurtured as members of a Catholic community
- ensure that procedures are in place for the management, storage, and retrieval of enrolment data, including in relation to the child's identity, immunisation, and visa status.

## Scope

The Enrolment Policy and Procedures – Secondary document applies to all families of prospective students who are seeking to enrol a child at Mercy Regional College and staff who are responsible for the administration of enrolment applications.

## Enrolment Principles

### Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for enrolment at Mercy Regional College, the prospective student must be:

- an Australian citizen
- entitled to stay in Australia, or enter and stay in Australia without limitation
- deemed eligible and approved for enrolment by the Principal as determined at their sole discretion.

### Enrolment Priorities

Mercy Regional College will follow the order of enrolment priority outlined below. As a Catholic school, the priority is the provision of a Catholic education for Catholic children from the school's parish/s. While Catholic schools in the Diocese of Ballarat are open to families of all faith and nonreligious backgrounds, they must give priority to enrol Catholic and Orthodox children ahead of other Christian denominations, non-Christians, or children of no religious affiliation.

Local pastoral discretion is an important element of decision-making regarding enrolment and is executed by the school Principal. While the first priority of the Principal is to enrol the children of Catholic parents, where deemed appropriate, pastoral discretion may be exercised in enrolment decisions where deemed appropriate.

The order of priority for secondary colleges is:

1. siblings of children already enrolled in the school
2. Catholic children (as evidenced by reception of sacraments) who have attended a Catholic primary school and for whom this is the closest diocesan Catholic co-educational Secondary school to the child's predominant residential address
3. Catholic children (as evidenced by reception of sacraments) who have not attended a Catholic primary school and for whom this is the closest diocesan Catholic co-educational Secondary school to the child's predominant residential address
4. other children who have attended a Catholic primary school, for whom this is closest diocesan Catholic co-educational Secondary school to the child's predominant residential address
5. children of alumni
6. other children who are seeking a Catholic secondary education who have not attended a Catholic primary school and for whom this is closest diocesan Catholic co-educational Secondary school to the child's predominant residential address.

### Overseas Students

When considering the enrolment of students on visas, the school Principal will consider the application with reference to DOBCEL guidance as well as legislative requirements. The Principal or their delegate will determine whether the student is fee-liable or eligible for government funding through outlined processes.

### Information to be Collected

The school is required to collect information about parents/guardians/carers and their child, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status of students who agree to be identified and counted in the census.

Parents/guardians/carers are required to provide information about their child during the enrolment

process to allow for DOBCEL and the school to meet its duty of care obligations and to satisfy government requirements.

## Commitment to Inclusivity

Mercy Regional College welcomes students and other members of the school community – including parents and staff - with a varying range of academic, behavioural, cultural, lifestyle, religious and individual characteristics. The school is an inclusive community, committed to complying with its legal obligations regarding inclusivity and supports the National Disability Standards for Education. Although Mercy Regional College is committed to undertaking reasonable adjustments for access requirements of an individual student, the practicalities of such will always be limited by the school's available resources.

## Legislative Context

*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Cth)*

*Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992*

*Disability Standards for Education 2005*

*Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)*

*Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.)*

*Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 (Cth)*

*Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)*

*Privacy Act 1988 and Privacy Amendment (Notifiable Data Breaches) Act 2017*

*Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012 (Vic)*

*Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*

*Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)*

*Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*

*Ministerial Order 1359: Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises*

*Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) minimum standards for schools*

## Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Catholic child</b>	<p>For enrolment in a Catholic school, a child is considered to be Catholic if they are a member of the Catholic Church, usually established by a Certificate of Baptism, have fully participated in a sacramental program or there is evidence of an intention to complete their sacramental journey.</p> <p>The definition of a Catholic includes those of both Eastern and Western Catholic Churches. In Australia, these Catholic Churches include, but are not limited to, those of the Latin (or Roman) rite, as well as Chaldeans, Maronites, Melkites, Syro-Malabars, and Ukrainians of Byzantine rite.</p>
<b>Catholic school</b>	<p>A Catholic school operated by DOBCEL is one which operates with the consent of the Bishop of Ballarat, where formation and education are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine.</p>

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Closest DOBCEL school</b>	<p>As measured by the student conveyance method - Student Conveyance Allowance System (SCAS) <a href="https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/conveyance-allowance/guidance/processing-applications-using-scas">https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/conveyance-allowance/guidance/processing-applications-using-scas</a></p> <p>In shared care arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>where one parent has more than 50% shared care that parent's residential address would determine the priority of enrolment.</li> </ul> <p>in the case of equal (50/50) shared care the closest residential address would determine the priority of enrolment</p>
<b>Domestic student</b>	Any student who is not classified as an international student.
<b>Enrolment Agreement and Enrolment Form</b>	<p>The Enrolment Agreement and Enrolment Form is an agreement which parents/guardians/carers enter with DOBCEL for enrolment at the DOBCEL school. The Enrolment Agreement stipulates the terms and conditions of enrolment and the way in which the school seeks to work in collaboration with families.</p> <p>Schools must have an Enrolment Agreement with parents/guardians/carers which is publicly available and easily accessible to current and prospective parents/guardians/carers.</p> <p>The enrolment form outlines the information that must be collected by the Principal of each school, to enable DOBCEL to satisfy its duty of care obligations and ensure it has the relevant information about each student to determine any need for adjustments.</p>
<b>Individual requirements</b>	Include allergies, health conditions, physical or intellectual disabilities, behavioural or learning challenges or difficulties, learning support requirements and needs of a medical, psychological, health or dietary nature.
<b>Parent</b>	A reference to 'parent' in this document includes a reference to a parent, guardian, or carer (as applicable).
<b>Parish</b>	Parish refers to the local parish as defined by its geographical boundaries and student location is based on home address.
<b>RI/MPJP College</b>	Religious Institutes (RI) and Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (MPJP) – Catholic schools operated by a governing entity other than DOBCEL.
<b>Schools</b>	Unless otherwise indicated 'schools' in this policy and these procedures refers to both primary and secondary schools within the Diocese of Ballarat.

## DOBCEL Principles of Governance

<b>Policy Owner</b>	<b>School Principal</b>
<b>Approval Date</b>	

All DOBCEL policies are founded on and reflect [DOBCEL Principles of Governance](#)

## Procedures

Parents seeking to enrol their child at Mercy Regional College should review the school's Enrolment Policy and these procedures to understand their obligations and the process should their application to enrol their child be successful.

- The parent/guardian/carer makes an enquiry with the administration team at the school
- The parent/guardian/carer submits an Application for Enrolment Form to the school by the required date
- Structured interview with parent/guardian/carer, according to the school's enrolment policy
- If a student was previously enrolled in a school interstate, use the Interstate Student Data Transfer Note (ISDTN) to collect additional information
- If the student is an Australian citizen, continue with school enrolment process, taking into consideration the school enrolment policies and procedures, privacy policies, and other relevant policies and procedures, viz
  - reviewing the student's enrolment application with reference to minimum and maximum school entry age policies
  - providing Enrolment Agreement and Parent /Guardian / Carer Code of Conduct, and Student Code of Conduct to parent/guardian/carer and student to review and sign if offered a place. Acceptance and signing of these documents is a condition of enrolment
- If the student is not an Australian citizen, obtain the student and parent/guardian/carer's visa number and refer to schedule of visa sub-classes to determine eligibility for government funding – General Recurrent Funding (GRG).
  - If the student is eligible for government funding, the Principal or delegate must ensure compliance with the Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 (ESOS Act).
    - i. Independent international students need to have their eligibility for targeted funding support as a new arrival (migrant or refugee) determined,
    - ii. Certified copies of travel documents (passport, visa grant notice, Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) notice, ImmiCard) must be sighted
    - iii. The funding application process for targeted new arrivals support must be completed.
  - The Principal or delegate then continues with the school enrolment process.
  - If the student is not eligible for government support, the student is classified as Full-Fee Paying Overseas Student (FFPOS) and is fee-liable. In this instance, the Principal will work with their Educational Consultant. Further supports are available on the CEVN International Students page: [https://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Melb/Student-Support/Cultural-Diversity/International-Students#education-services-for-overseas-students-\(esos\)](https://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Melb/Student-Support/Cultural-Diversity/International-Students#education-services-for-overseas-students-(esos))

The Principal has discretion whether to place a prospective student on the waiting list, offer an interview, or offer a place of enrolment. In exercising that discretion, the Principal considers a range of criteria, including but not limited to the following:

- the child's eligibility for a priority offer of enrolment as determined by the Enrolment Policy
- the date a fully completed Application for Enrolment form is received (noting incomplete applications will not be processed)
- the information disclosed in the Application for Enrolment form
- the child's pre-enrolment interview and if applicable, pre-enrolment assessments

- the child’s academic record and behavioural history
- whether the values and beliefs of the child’s family clearly align with the vision, mission, Catholic faith and values of the school
- whether the child is a Catholic student seeking to transfer from another Catholic school
- the starting year level of the child and whether this aligns with a main year level entry point at the school
- the school’s capacity, as an inclusive school, to support a prospective student’s special needs in the school environment (below)
- the merits of the application, prospective student’s suitability for enrolment at the school, and individual circumstances and practical implications including:
  - the number of students currently enrolled at the school
  - the prospective student’s family circumstances (including the willingness of the student and their parent to comply with the school’s policies and procedures)
  - the prospective student’s interests and participation in extra-curricular activities (including religious activities)
  - school-readiness and age of the student (for entry to Prep/Foundation only)
  - the willingness of each family to endorse the school’s vision, mission, Catholic education, and values; and
  - any other considerations set out in this policy.
- the impact of enrolling students on the educational and financial operations of the school including facility requirements
- the discretion of the Principal to reserve a number of places for scholarship and bursary recipients.

## Enrolment of Students over the Maximum School Entry Age

### Enrolment of Students with Consideration of the Maximum Age Exception and Exemption

Generally, a person who is aged over 18 years would not be a new enrolment at, or permitted to attend, a DOBCEL school, or participate in any program or course conducted unless they:

- first complete and submit a Maximum Age Exemption Form
- have been granted an exemption by the Executive Director
- fall within an exception to the maximum age requirements.

### Maximum Age Exception Criteria

The Principal of a DOBCEL school may enrol a student (without completion of the **Maximum Age Exemption Form**) where either of the following exception criteria are met:

- the student will turn 18 during the year of enrolment in an accredited senior secondary course, such as the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), Victorian Certificate of Education Vocational Major (VCE VM), the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) (according to the VCAA’s 2023 teach out arrangements), the International Baccalaureate (IB), Vocational Education and Training (VET) or an accredited foundation secondary course, for example, Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC). These are the specific types of courses that qualify for the maximum age exemption
- the student will turn 19 during the year of enrolment for the sole purpose of completing an accredited senior secondary course or accredited foundation secondary course in that year, or the

student is expected to successfully complete their course in the year of enrolment based on the current course plan and assessment information.

### **Maximum Age Exemptions**

An exemption must be sought where the student needs to meet the exception criteria outlined above. This process involves three categories for maximum age exemption: Special Circumstances, English Language, and Other Exemptions as approved by the Executive Director's delegate. The student must meet specific requirements in each category to be eligible for an exemption.

### **Applying for a Maximum Age Exemption**

After determining the appropriate maximum age exemption category, the Maximum Age Exemption form must be completed and submitted to the Secondary Education Consultant.

1. Section 1 must be completed by the person seeking the exemption, or their parent/guardian/carer
2. Section 2 must be completed by the Principal of the college the person wishes to attend. Together with all supporting documents, this form should be forwarded to the Secondary Education Consultant
3. Section 3 must be completed and signed by the Executive Director.

The person, or their parent, should inform the college if they require assistance to support them to understand the exemption process. Note: if a person is eligible for an exemption in more than one category, they must submit a separate application form for each exemption.

If the criteria are met, parent (s) are required to complete the Maximum Age Exemption Application Form Mercy Regional College and submit it to Executive Director via the Principal.

## **Enrolment Procedures for the School**

### **Enrolment of students with additional learning requirements**

Mercy Regional College welcomes parents who wish to enrol a child with additional learning requirements and will explore available options to identify and meet these. The procedure for enrolling students with additional learning needs is the same as that for enrolling any student. When considering the enrolment of a child with additional learning requirements, Mercy Regional College is required to comply with the relevant Australian and Victorian government legislation.

### **Enrolment of students from an interstate school**

When enrolling students whose previous school was outside Victoria, Mercy Regional College will use the protocols of the Interstate Student Data Transfer Note (ISDTN). This is a mandatory requirement of the Australian Government. It is the responsibility of the school to initiate and manage this procedure and be sensitive to parent/student consent requirements for the provision of information. All relevant documents and information are available on the Australian Government's Department of Education website.

### **Enrolment of full fee-paying overseas students (FFPOS)**

Full fee-paying overseas students who wish to enrol at Mercy Regional College are to refer to the Dependant Full-Fee Paying Overseas Students (FFPOS) Application Procedure which explains the application procedure, requirements and the relevant visa classes and fees that apply.

Mercy Regional College will ensure parents provide up to date evidence of their visa status from the Department of Home Affairs, including any changes to visa or citizenship status as soon as they are notified.

If the criteria are met, parents and the Principal are required to complete the Dependant Full-Fee Paying Overseas Students (FFPOS) Application Form and submit to Executive Director for assessment and approval at [ffpos@DOBCEL.vic.edu.au](mailto:ffpos@DOBCEL.vic.edu.au).

## Register of Enrolments

Mercy Regional College is required to keep an electronic record (Enrolment Register) of all students enrolled at the school. The register includes the following information:

- name, age, date of birth and residential address of student
- parent names and contact details
- date of enrolment
- the Victorian Student Number allocated to the student
- medical information for emergency management purposes
- emergency contact details
- sacramental information
- if applicable: home care arrangements, court orders, transfer records.
- date of leaving the school and further information concerning student's departure, where appropriate
- for students older than six years, details of previous schools or pre-enrolment situation.

The register is retained in accordance with the Records Management Policy and Procedures [DOBCEL] after the student leaves the school, and copies of information in the register are stored off-site at regular intervals.

## Termination of Enrolment

In certain limited circumstances a termination of enrolment may occur. An example is where the relationship between a school and a family has irretrievably broken down due to significant and/or repeated breaches of the school's Parent Code of Conduct, the school's Enrolment Agreement, and relevant school policies. Parents are, as a condition of enrolment, expected to read, sign, and comply with the Code of Conduct, the school's Enrolment Agreement, and relevant school policies.

Parents who breach the Code of Conduct, Enrolment Agreement, and/or school policies will be contacted by the Principal. Appropriate action, which may include limiting or reducing access to the school grounds, attending school functions or school-based activities or, setting mandatory parameters concerning methods and timing of communication, or imposing an Immediate or [Ongoing School Community Safety Order](#) is at the discretion of the Principal and other authorised persons.

A termination of enrolment based on parental/guardian/carer conduct must be approved by the Executive Director, and such approval is provided only in the following circumstances:

- a breach of the Code of Conduct on the part of a parent has previously occurred
- the parent/guardian/carer has, because of that previous breach, been warned that any subsequent breach of the Code of Conduct by them (or the family) may result in a termination of enrolment
- a further breach of the Code of Conduct occurs, either by the parent, or by another family member in relevant circumstances.

A termination of enrolment may also occur where, on a single occasion, a parent has engaged in conduct which constitutes a serious breach of the Parent 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 decision to withdraw or terminate the enrolment of a student may be made by the Executive Director, upon consideration of the following:

- the view of the Principal of the school
- an objective assessment of all presenting circumstances, including the nature and gravity of the conduct and whether the parent has been given any previous warnings



- procedural fairness in the decision-making process, including an opportunity for the student and their family to be heard and all relevant information considered.

Students are also, as a condition of enrolment, expected to read and comply with the school's Student Code of Conduct (Code of Conduct).

The consequences for student misbehaviour, serious and/or persistent breaches of the student code of conduct are outlined in the Student Behaviour Policy and Procedures. The Suspension, Negotiated Transfer, and Expulsion of Students Policy and Procedures detail the management of suspension, expulsion, and appeals processes.

In accordance with applicable legislation and the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, the police, 'Families and Children's Services' within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), and/or any other relevant bodies will be informed of any unlawful breaches of these Codes of Conduct.

## Parent/Guardian/Carer Responsibilities

At enrolment, parents/guardians/carers commit to providing ongoing support for their child's Catholic education. Parents/guardians/carers are asked to make an explicit commitment to the following responsibilities:

- to complete the school's Application for Enrolment Form and ensure it is returned by the due date. N.B. This does not guarantee enrolment in the school. An Offer of Enrolment Form is sent to prospective students containing the school's Acceptance of Offer of Enrolment Form. Once the Acceptance of Offer of Enrolment Form is signed and received, the child is considered formally enrolled
- at enrolment time to inform the school of all additional individual requirements
- to be prepared to support the school in the Catholic education of their child and engage with the school community as much as possible,
- to commit to conforming with expected standards of parental behaviour as outlined in the school's Parent & Carer Code of Conduct signed upon enrolment of their child.
- to acknowledge and commit to meeting the financial responsibilities arising from the ongoing enrolment of their child. (Any difficulties in meeting this commitment should be discussed with the Principal or Business Manager)
- to advise the Principal of any court order or custodial arrangement/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 school file
- to provide all information requested at the time of enrolment as required from time to time.

## Complaints regarding enrolment

Mercy Regional College is required to maintain a fair, effective, and efficient complaints-handling process so that complaints about enrolment and other matters at the school can be addressed.

An appeal in relation to enrolment or termination of enrolment is to be made in accordance with the Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures [DOBCEL] and the Suspension, Negotiated Transfer and Expulsion of Students Policy and Procedures [DOBCEL]. Initial concerns can be raised with the Principal either in writing or by making an appointment for an interview.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility	Details
Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval for exemption for enrolment under the minimum and maximum school entry age</li> <li>Decision to withdraw or terminate a student's enrolment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written approval required. Subject to student meeting criteria outlined in these procedures</li> <li>Consideration of the view of the Principal and all circumstances, nature, and gravity of actions of students</li> </ul>
Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acceptance and management of all enrolments</li> <li>Publication of school enrolment policies, procedures, agreement, enrolment pack, forms, and School Community Safety Order internal review process on school website</li> <li>Compliance with DOBCEL enrolment policies</li> <li>Maintenance of Enrolment Register</li> <li>A DOBCEL secondary college identifies a variation in enrolment demand and as such streams are required to be added or subtracted from a year level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report enrolment data to Executive Director through the February and August censuses</li> <li>Annual attestation to the Executive Director</li> <li>Annual attestation to the Executive Director with any breaches identified</li> <li>Register of enrolments of all students who have been enrolled at a school to be maintained in electronic form. The register must include all required information</li> <li>Notify the Secondary Education Consultant at the earliest possible time.</li> </ul>

## Supporting Documentation

### Internal

- [Actioning Education for All: A guide for a whole of system approach to inclusive practices for Catholic Education Ballarat \(DOBCEL\)](#)
- Complaints Management Policy & Procedure [DOBCEL]
- Enrolment Application Form [SCHOOL]
- Record Management Policy and Procedures [DOBCEL]
- Repeating a Year Level – Information Sheet for Principals (TBC)
- Student Behaviour Policy and Procedures [School]
- Suspension Negotiated Transfer, and Expulsion of Students Policy and Procedures [DOBCEL]
- Transition for Students with Diverse Needs

### Forms and Templates

- Enrolment Application Form [School Form]
- Enrolment Agreement Form [School Form]
- Offer of Enrolment [School Form]

Includes:

- Offer of Enrolment letter template

- Acceptance of Offer of Enrolment letter template
- Non-Acceptance of Offer of Enrolment letter template
- Maximum Age Exemption Application Form [School Form]
- Minimum Age Exemption Application Form [School Form]
- Change of Financial Responsibility Form [School Form]
- Unsuccessful Enrolment Application Letter [School Template]
- Enrolment Planning Tool [DOBCEL]
- Parents/Guardians/Carers Code of Conduct [School Template]

## External

- Transferring Student Data Interstate <https://www.education.gov.au/transferring-student-data-interstate>
- [School Community Safety Order Scheme: Ministerial Guidelines \(Vic Government\)](#)

Principal	<b>Ms Sharon Gillett</b>
Approval Date	01 March 2025