Catholic Schools Office
DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

APPLICABLE TO	All schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle		
DOCUMENT OWNER	Director of Schools		
SCHOOL ACTIONS	System procedure: Schools are to ensure their practices are consistent with this procedure. A local procedure is not required.		
APPROVAL DATE	May 2018		
APPROVED BY	CSO Leadership Team		
LAST REVIEW DATE/S	February 2013	NEXT REVIEW DATE	2021
RELATED DOCUMENTS	Enrolment Policy 2018 Catholic School Enrolment Package Guidelines for the Enrolment and Transition of Students with Disabilities and Additional Needs Enrolments of Overseas Students School Community Code of Conduct Wellbeing and Pastoral Care – Students Policy and Procedure		

Purpose

To provide guidelines for enrolment within a Catholic school in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Scope

This procedure is provided for use by CSO and system staff and for families enrolling in a Catholic School within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Responsibilities

The enrolment process is characterised by family, school, CSO and parish partnerships based on mutual responsibility, respect, effective communication and trust. These partnerships need to be demonstrated and strengthened by the enrolment procedure and practice.

Parish Priest

The Parish Priest in collaboration with the Principal has the following responsibilities in the enrolment process to:

- communicate the commencement of enrolment period in parish bulletins.
- positively link the school with its parish community and participate in the enrolment induction and information session for families.
- review applications for enrolment with the principal where required.
- welcome enrolling families and encourage their active involvement in the Catholic community.
- encourage Catholic families in the parish or parishes to consider enrolment in the school.

Principal

The Principal, in collaboration with the Parish Priest, has the following responsibilities in the enrolment process to:

- ensure that the authentic vision of Catholic education remains the guiding principle in the application of the Enrolment Policy (see Catholic Identity of Diocesan Schools available on the CSO website).

- seek to develop a fruitful relationship between the local Catholic parish and school community and those families seeking enrolment.

- ensure that the school has practices and processes that reflect the Enrolment Policy rationale and guiding principles.

- positively discriminate in favour of those with the greatest need.

- give parents clear information about enrolment in a Catholic school.

- ensure that the Enrolment Policy implementation is exercised in a just and compassionate manner.

- advise school personnel of the underpinning values and Catholic ethos that always have to guide decisions about enrolment and interactions with families.

- respond to any concerns from families in enrolment matters.

- ensure no student is refused enrolment because of an inability, as distinct from an unwillingness, of a parent/carer to meet financial requirements.

- employ strategies for communicating with the broader community, including Catholic families, about school enrolment policy and processes.

- consult with the CSO on matters requiring clarification and be involved in ongoing feedback and evaluation of the enrolment process.

- ensure confidentiality and privacy guidelines are followed.

- communicate with previous or feeder school if required.

Catholic Schools Office

The Catholic Schools Office is responsible to the Bishop in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle to:

- develop, monitor and evaluate enrolment policies for Catholic schools.

- encourage strong partnerships between priests, parents, principals and staff.

- monitor enrolment information submitted by the school and action taken by the school to ensure the Catholic Identity of the school and the basic aims of Catholic education are strongly maintained.

- ensure that enrolment criteria are clear and unambiguous; and the enrolment policy complies with all relevant legislation.

- advise and support schools with the implementation of the Enrolment Policy.

- ensure that school personnel carry out their responsibilities appropriately in relation to the Enrolment Policy.

- fund system-wide advertising at the opening of the enrolment period each year.

Parent and Carers

Parents and carers enrolling their children in Catholic schools have the following responsibilities:

- respect and agree to support Catholic ideals, principles and practices and acknowledge the importance of religious education for their children.

- commit themselves to a parish community that works towards the education, formation and pastoral care of young people.

- complete the official enrolment form and return it by the due date with all 'Required Documentation'. (Such action, however, does not guarantee enrolment in the school.)

- sign and accept the Conditions of Enrolment and School Community Code of Conduct.

- recognise and be prepared to meet their financial responsibilities for the ongoing enrolment of the child.

- disclose any special educational needs of the prospective student.

- disclose any particular medical, social and/or emotional conditions as well as health care requirements of the prospective student and allow for communication with relevant medical personnel if required.
- advise the Principal of any Court Order(s) that may exist in regard to the child and provide a certified copy of the Order(s) for the child's school file.
- provide the necessary visa documentation relating to an overseas student enrolment.

Staff

Staff working with students enrolled in Catholic schools the following responsibilities:

- respect and agree to support Catholic ideals, principles and practices and acknowledge the importance of religious education for the students.
- treat each other and all members of the school community with respect.
- model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession and to be aware that our conduct, both personally and by the use of all social media technology, during school hours and beyond, impacts on our professionalism and is subject to scrutiny.
- work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful and safe conduct is expected of everyone and to communicate with appropriate staff when peaceful and safe environments are challenged by any member of the school community.
- behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide inclusive, safe and orderly environments.
- plan, implement and monitor arrangements to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students in attendance at the school is protected.
- seek to identify and do our best to support students who are or may be at risk.
- do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential.
- work with parents to understand their child's needs and, where necessary and reasonable, adapt the learning environment accordingly.
- proactively engage with parents about student outcomes and work collaboratively with parents to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for all students.
- make known to parents the school's communication procedures and the Complaints and Grievances Policy.
- abide by the CSO Staff Code of Conduct (2017).

Students

Students enrolled in Catholic schools have the following responsibilities:

- model positive behaviour to other students.
- comply with all relevant school policies and model school values in line with the School Community Code of Conduct.
- behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- respect ourselves and other members of the school community both personally and through the use of all social media technologies at all times.
- act in a manner that demonstrates integrity and respect for all school community members and our school environment
- actively participate in our school community.
- support the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.

Step by Step

1. ENROLMENT APPLICATION PROCESS

1.1   All completed applications for enrolment lodged with the School Principal by the designated closing date will be treated in accordance with the enrolment policy and procedures.

1.2   Although the local context, as well as whether the school is primary or secondary may vary the order of enrolment procedures, the following processes will normally occur:

1. INITIAL ENROLMENT ENQUIRY

- Enrolments for the following year open in Catholic Schools Week in early March.
- Parent/Carer obtains Enrolment Package for primary or secondary school.
- Parent/Carer completes enrolment form, provides all 'Required information' and submits application directly to school.
- Non-refundable fee paid.
- Lodgement of enrolment form does not guarantee an offer of enrolment.

2. PRINCIPAL/SCHOOL INTERVIEW WITH FAMILY

- Interviews begin in Term 1, and continue through Terms 2 and 3 depending on applications received.
- Focus on determining educational needs.
- If student has a disability, the school will consult with Student Support Unit at the CSO (see Guidelines for Enrolment and Transition of Students with Disabilities/Additional Needs).

3. CONFIRMATION OF OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE OF ENROLMENT

- Parents/carers receive offer of a place at the school in writing in Term 3.

4. ORIENTATION/TRANSITION SESSIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Orientation for students held in Terms 3 or 4 depending on the school.

1.3   The enrolment period is advertised as being open. Enrolments for the following year take place between February and June and in particular, during Catholic Schools Week, when parents and their children are invited to come to the school's open day and enrol. Application Forms are available from school offices or from our website (provide link).

1.4   Parent/Carer contacts the school requesting an official Application for Enrolment Form and Enrolment Handbook. Enrolment policies and further enrolment information is also available on the Catholic Schools Office Website: mn.catholic.edu.au. Assistance will be provided to parents/carers to understand the policy and procedures.

1.5   A new application for enrolment must be completed for enrolment into Kindergarten and transitioning from Year 6 to Year 7 as well as when moving from a junior to a senior secondary school in the diocese (Year 10 to Year 11). Application forms will only be accepted upon provision of 'Required Information' as defined in the Enrolment Policy.

1.6   Parents who make application for enrolment for their child/children are invited for an interview with the Principal or nominee. During this interview the following issues would be discussed:

- The ethos of the Catholic School and our School Community Code of Conduct
- The schools' relationship to the Parish or the Pastoral Region

- The primacy of the parents as their child's educators and their relationship to the school
- Particular characteristics or needs of the child
- The financial arrangements necessary to maintain a Catholic School
- The parents' ability to meet financial obligations and where this needs to be varied, discussions as to any variation.

1.7　Successful applicants will be contacted and offered a place in the appropriate class.

1.8　A non-refundable fee is required either when lodging the enrolment form or on confirmation of an enrolment offer.

1.9　Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing. Students may also be placed on a waiting list. Any formalised waiting list is to be prioritised and procedurally fair. Appeals against the decision shall be made firstly to the Principal, then to the appropriate Assistant Director at the Catholic Schools Office.

1.10　In some circumstances it may be necessary to put some applications 'on hold' pending finalisation of late (Catholic) arrivals. Those concerned should be advised of the situation and the time when they may expect a definite answer. The advice of the Catholic Schools Office may need to be sought in some circumstances.

1.11　Induction sessions for pre-school, Year 7 and Year 11 students are generally held during the second semester of the year preceding the child beginning at a new school. This induction may be over a longer period for those students with learning support needs.

2. ENROLMENT PRIORITISATION

2.1　The Principal, in consultation with the Parish or Regional Priest or their nominee, will list applications in order of priority. Depending on enrolment numbers it may be appropriate for the Parish/Region Priest and School Principal to discuss the enrolment of non-Catholic students. This should occur before enrolment is finalised.

2.2　An enrolment panel may be convened by the principal/s and/or parish priest to provide advice or to conduct interviews if required. Ordinarily, the panel will comprise the Parish Priest (or his representative) as well as the principal/s. Enrolment panels can be convened for an individual school or a cluster of schools served by the same parish priest. A Principal will chair the panel. In the exercise of its role the panel respects fully the confidentiality of all applicants and any discussion relating to them.

2.3　The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that the Catholic identity of the school is maintained and promoted.

2.4　Should distinction in potential enrolments be required, the following priorities for **primary schools** is recommended:

a. Catholic families of the Parish who are known and involved members of the Parish.

b. Catholic 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.

c. Catholic families of the Parish who participate irregularly in the life and worship of the Parish.

d. 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.

e. Catholic families who do not participate in Parish life.

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

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

h. Families who have no religious affiliation but who are open to the possibilities offered by a Catholic school.

Notes

▶ Siblings of children already enrolled in the school are considered according to the criteria above. However, within each of these categories, a sibling of a child already enrolled will have preference over an applicant who does not have a sibling enrolled in the school.

▶ A higher priority should be given to applicants with the greatest need within each of these categories.

2.5 Should distinction in potential enrolments be required, the following priorities for **secondary schools** is recommended and the **order of preference** is as follows:

a. Catholic families of the associated feeder Parish schools who are known and involved members of those Parishes.

b. Catholic families of other Parishes who are known and involved members of their own Parish but who have particular educational needs that can be best met in this school and who have been enrolled in Catholic schools outside the core zone. (Students seeking out-of-zone enrolments must provide a summary, with their enrolment form, of the reasons for their request. This will be considered by the Principal and Parish Priest or Enrolment Panel).

c. Catholic families of the associated feeder Parishes who participate irregularly in the life and worship of those Parishes enrolled in the core feeder zone schools.

d. Families of other Christian denominations, and who have children enrolled in the core zone feeder schools.

e. Families of associated feeder Parishes who are known and involved members of their Parishes and who have children enrolled in core zone government or other Christian denomination schools.

f. Families of the associated Parishes who participate irregularly in the life and worship of the Parish and who have children enrolled in core zone government or other Christian denomination schools.

Notes

▶ Children who have completed their primary education in Catholic schools will generally have priority of entry into Catholic secondary schools.

▶ Siblings of children already enrolled in the school are considered by the same criteria above. However, within each of these categories, a sibling of a child already enrolled will have preference over an applicant who does not have a sibling enrolled in the school.

▶ A higher priority should be given to applicants with the greatest need within each of these categories.

3. BASIS FOR DISCRETION

3.1 Local pastoral discretion is an important element of decision-making with regard to enrolment in a Catholic school. Therefore, while bearing in mind that their first priority is to Catholic parents, Parish Priests and Principals of Catholic schools can exercise some flexibility in enrolment decisions where pastoral discretion may be deemed necessary.

3.2 Discretionary decisions could include:

a. In cases of poverty, disability or special needs a child may, and if possible should, be given a higher position in the priorities listed than would otherwise apply.

b. Parents' intentions regarding their own and their children's search for education in the faith

c. Family situations requiring compassion or a special pastoral approach

d. Family circumstances involving family relocation

e. Students who have not been able to access a Catholic school previously because of location

f. The diocesan Catholic school is part of a system of schools whose members work in cooperation for the common good of all and recognise that enrolment choices can impact on other schools.

g. Catholic schools need to advise parents of their co-responsibility for the educational viability of other schools in the diocese. Schools need to make careful planning decisions which have implications for school facilities, staffing, financial security and curriculum. Central to these decisions is predictability and stability in enrolments. Whilst every effort is made to accommodate students at the preferred Catholic school this cannot be guaranteed.

h. It is expected that Principals would confer with each other when considering applications from families seeking the enrolment of children who are currently attending a Catholic school outside the Parish served by the school. Particular consideration would be given to the pastoral needs of the family and the potential impact on enrolment patterns across the Catholic system.

i. Parents need to be made aware that consultation will occur between schools with regards to transfer applications. It is recommended that parents inform the Principal of their school of origin of their intention to seek alternative placement.

j. Catholic school communities should endeavour, where feasible, to 'reserve' some enrolment places for Catholic families who transfer into the parish community after the traditional enrolment periods. Previous enrolment trends may assist in this planning.

4. TRANSFER BETWEEN SCHOOLS

4.1 Any acceptance of a student transfer should occur only after consultation between respective schools.

4.2 Any Catholic school accepting an enrolment from another Catholic school or school sector should seek information and obtain copies of student documentation as well as send appropriate advice to the student's previous school.

5. ENROLMENT GENERATED STRUCTURAL CHANGES

5.1 Proposed changes by schools to current structures and/or educational delivery because of a change to enrolment patterns or practices of a significant nature should be discussed with Assistant Directors and then communicated in writing to the Director of Catholic Schools.

5.2 A significant change is considered to be one of, or a combination of, the following:

• An increase in enrolments that would impact on the enrolments of other Catholic schools

- An increase in enrolments that would require capital development to accommodate the change
- A significant decrease in the number of Catholic enrolments

5.3   A minor change is considered to be one that is not likely to impact on the Catholic identity of the school or on enrolments of other Catholic schools, nor require capital development to accommodate the change.

5.4   In circumstances where enrolment numbers approach upper limits for class groups the principal acts with concern for parish and system resources.

6. IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLING AT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

6.1   The NSW *Public Health Act 2010* requires principals of primary and secondary schools to:

- request an immunisation certificate at enrolment that shows the student's immunisation status.
- maintain an immunisation register that records the immunisation status of students at enrolment.
- retain immunisation records for 3 years from the date on which each enrolled student ceases to attend the school, and provide a copy of a student's immunisation certificate to a new school where the child is due to enrol (upon request).
- notify their local public health unit if an enrolled student has a vaccine preventable disease; or if an unvaccinated enrolled student has come into contact with a person with a vaccine preventable disease. Principals must provide the name of students in these circumstances as specified in the *Public Health Act 2010* and this overrides any privacy concerns.

6.2   Children can still be enrolled if an immunisation certificate is not provided OR if they are listed on the immunisation certificate as not fully immunised. However, these children will be considered unimmunised and may be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease at the school OR if they come into contact with a person with a vaccine preventable disease, even if there is no outbreak at the school.

6.3   The NSW Health Parent Information brochure provides useful information for parents including how parents can obtain a copy of their child's immunisation certificate
http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/school-immunisation-brochure.aspx

6.4   Under the *Public Health Act 2010*, schools must maintain an immunisation register and record each student's immunisation status on the immunisation register at enrolment. This information is used by the public health unit to manage outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases. Student immunisation status is printed on the immunisation certificate and must be entered into the student's record in SAS (or otherwise, the school immunisation register). Immunisation status can be one of the following:

- Up to date – fully immunised for their age
- Not up to date – not fully immunised for their age
- Medical exemption – has a medical reason not to be vaccinated
- Catch-up schedule – is on a recognised catch-up schedule if the child has fallen behind with their immunisations
- No immunisation certificate provided

More information about these legal responsibilities is available on the NSW Health website at www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation.

Appendix 1: Enrolment Guidelines for Students with Disability

To be read in conjunction with Guidelines for the Enrolment and Transition of Students with Disabilities and Additional Needs.

	Initial parent/carer enquiry. School sends Application for Enrolment form ↓ As per Enrolment Policy, school personnel meet with parent and student to discuss the contents of the Enrolment Form and to gather more information. Completion of the questions listed in Appendix 1 will help to determine whether the student has a disability/additional needs. <u>The LST/LSC must be involved in this step in order to assist in determining whether the student has a disability</u>. **Does the student have a disability?**

| **PHASE 1:**
Enrolment Application | **YES**
Contact the Senior Education Officer (Student Support Unit) at the CSO. If the student requires supplementary adjustments (Level A – B) enrolment may proceed. If the student requires substantial/extensive adjustments (Level C or above), a CSO Education Officer (EO) from the Student Support Unit will be allocated to support the school to gather more detailed information about the student's needs.

For students requiring support at Level C or above, the school now needs to submit:
• Pre-enrolment: Request for Support Form – SWD – Level C - E (Appendix 2)
• CSO Parent Permission/Release of Information Form - Pre-enrolment/Transition/Validation (Appendix 3). | **NO**
Follow procedures as per Enrolment Policy |

| **PHASE 2:**
Information Gathered about the Student's Educational /Support Needs | School personnel, and CSO EO, will work in collaboration to collect information to determine student's educational and support needs. Information gathered in Appendix 1 can be used to guide what areas need to be explored further, including areas such as those listed below:

• Mobility needs - physical access, equipment, building modifications   • Communication needs
• Health Care needs   • Curriculum needs
• Personal care needs   • Safety issues
• Mental Health needs   • Emergency procedures
       • Social, emotional, behavioural needs
(See Appendices 4–9) |

| **PHASE 3:**
Enrolment Decision/ Negotiating the Student's Curriculum | Meeting of relevant school/CSO personnel is held to discuss all of the information gathered. Principal considers whether the school can meet the student's needs and makes a decision regarding enrolment. The Assistant Director may be invited to attend this meeting.

Principal meets with parents, CSO personnel and other key stakeholders, as relevant, to discuss the educational program, adjustments, and resources that the school can offer |

PHASE 4: **Action Following Enrolment Decision**	Enrolment proceeds	Enrolment does not proceed
	• Letter to parents offering/accepting the enrolment; signed by parents • Information is provided about the transition process • Develop Transition Plan (See Appendices 10-11)	This may occur because: 1. Parents choose not to continue with enrolment if they believe school is unable to meet their child's needs or 2. School can demonstrate that enrolment will cause unreasonable adjustment and/or unjustifiable hardship in relation to student and circumstances of the school. **(Only after written advice is provided by the CSO SSU and Director's Unit)**
PHASE 5: **Transition**	Transition commences. Follow the planning procedures as outlined in the Transition section of this handbook.	Support is provided in seeking enrolment in an alternate setting

Appendix 2: Urgent Request for Student Background Information and Documents

CONFIDENTIAL

To be completed by the Principal of the school at which the student is seeking to enrol.

From the Principal: ....

To the Principal: ....

Dear Colleague,

The student whose name and date of birth appear below has sought to enrol at this school.

Student's name: ....

Date of birth: ....Sex: Male ☐   Female ☐

To assist us to conduct a risk assessment in the context of enrolment, I would appreciate all relevant and available information about the student's behaviour and disciplinary history and would be obliged if you would arrange for that information to be forwarded to me. This should include the student's enrolment details, risk assessments undertaken relating to the student, behaviour management or disciplinary processes undertaken with the school, any reports of concerns raised by classroom teachers, notes of the student welfare committee etc.

If there are particular aspects of this student's behaviour of which I should be aware, please contact me:

Direct phone number: ....

Email address: ....

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL OF THE STUDENT'S FORMER SCHOOL.

Please indicate in each of the boxes **Y** (yes) or **N** (no) or **O** if unsure

☐ To be managed at school this student required behaviour support. Please forward a copy of the relevant program.

☐ This student has a documented history of violence or use of illicit drugs or legal drugs in a manner not prescribed or use of alcohol.

☐ This student was suspended/expelled for violence, threats of violence or possession on school premises of a weapon or implement used or intended to cause harm

Information on this student, including details of any safety concerns, will be posted to you in an envelope marked *Personal and Confidential* by [Date].

Confidentiality Warning
The confidentiality of the information contained in this message is protected and is intended for the principal named above. If you are not the named recipient you must not copy, distribute, take any action reliant on or disclose any details in this message to any other person or organisation. Unauthorised disclosure or misuse of the confidential information obtained as a result of mistaken transmission may incur a liability for criminal penalty. Please notify the sender if you have received this message in error.

Please respond by return email.