



Approved:

Principal: 21-08-2017

College Council: 21-08-2017

Review: Every 2 years (Before August 2020)

ENROLMENT POLICY

1. Purpose of this Policy

Melton Christian College is a Christian school founded to provide Christian education for the children of families who desire that particular education. Therefore, in accordance with this enrolment policy, the College invites into partnership those families who are supportive of its Christ-centred vision and purpose.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the processes, protocols and conditions surrounding enrolment. Thus, this policy guides the College in determining and accepting the optimum number of suitable applicants within the guidelines authorized by College Council. Additionally this policy aims to safeguard that the Christian ethos, doctrine and practices of the College are upheld, while offering the opportunity to new and existing students high-standard, Christ-centred education. Furthermore, this policy aims to clarify the expectation that applicant families must agree to support the policies, practices and procedures of the College.

2. Background

a. Christian Doctrine is Intrinsic to Christian Education at the College

The College recognizes that applicant families will have various Christian church affiliations. Moreover, the College sometimes receives enquiries from families with no religious affiliation, or from families who adhere to a religion other than Christianity. Families who apply for enrolment should understand that at this school their children will be taught Christian education. The College reserves the right to insist that families who apply for enrolment of their children, agree to have their children taught Christian education. The College's doctrines are based in the Christian Bible, the Apostles Creed, and the traditions of the Christian church. The College's doctrines and Christian traditions are an intrinsic to Christian education as it is provided by the College.

b. Applicants Agree to Support College Policies and Procedures

By submitting an application form, applicant families are indicating their support for the ethos, identity, purposes, practices and policies of the College. In other words, by signing the application form, applicant parents are agreeing to act and speak as partners with the College should their application be successful. The College's expectation is that this is so, and that prior to signing the application

form each applicant must consider the College's policies and procedures and weigh up their readiness to endorse these should a place be offered.

c. Factors Influencing Enrolment

The College will exercise its discretion in determining whether to make an offer of enrolment. The decision to offer a place is based on a range of information and factors and determined on a case-by-case basis. Each application is appraised on its merits, taking individual circumstances, finances and practical implications into account as well as the following factors:

- the actual numbers of currently enrolled students and practical availability of places;
- the resources available to cater for the educational needs of students;
- the willingness of the student and the student's family (as applicable) to comply with the College's policies and procedures.

The College has a limited number of places that can be offered per year level each year. As such, due to the limited places available, applicants simply may not be able to be offered a place due to class size limits.

3. Enrolment Procedures

a. Pre-application Procedure

Prior to submitting an Expression of Interest form to express interest in enrolment, prospective families are encouraged to attend Open Day or School at Work morning, or visit the campus for a tour and an initial conversation with the Principal or another senior staffer.

The steps prior to applying for enrolment are listed here:

- Step 1: Completed Expression of Interest form is submitted to the College office
- Step 2: All enquiries are carefully considered by the Principal and senior team
- Step 3: Selected submissions are then invited to make a formal Application for Enrolment

The rationale for these steps preceding the submission of a formal application is to protect families from pointlessly preparing their application and paying the application fee, when their application may have no chance of being accepted due to preclusive factors such as no places being available.

b. Application Procedure

After steps 1 and 2 above, a family may next be notified by the College Registrar that they are invited to make a formal application for enrolment, they then follow the next steps.

The next steps to apply for enrolment are listed here:

- Step 4: Those applying for enrolment must read the College Handbook, which is published on the College website. They should then enquire directly with administration staff regarding any matter on which they are uncertain.
- Step 5: The formal Application for Enrolment, other relevant forms, children's current reports, and the non-refundable application fee are then submitted to the College office. Where there is more than one parent or guardian applicant, both persons must sign the Enrolment Application form. (Unless a court order dictates otherwise and in that case a copy is to be provided to the College.)
- Step 6: Receipt of Application for Enrolment will be acknowledged in writing by the College Registrar.
- Step 7: An enrolment interview with the Principal or Head of School is then scheduled, parents and prospective students attend. The outcome of the enrolment interview will determine whether a place in the College will be offered. Availability of places is a determining factor therefore, some applicants may be allocated to a waiting list.
- Step 8: Notification regarding the outcome of the enrolment interview will be provided in writing; where places are available successful applicants will receive a Letter of Acceptance.
- Step 9: The Acceptance Form is then completed, signed and returned to the College office with a \$500 deposit, within 14 days. Where there is more than one parent or guardian applicant, both persons must sign the Enrolment Acceptance form, and it should be understood that this is a contractual agreement.
- Step 10: All newly enrolled students are accepted on a one term probationary basis.

Formal application is a pre-requisite to enrolment, but it does not guarantee progress to the interview stage of processing, nor does any interview guarantee an offer of enrolment. The Principal, in consultation with the School Executive, reserves the right to offer or not offer a place to any student, irrespective of the date of application.

c. Enrolment Interview

Interviews are required for all families as part of the application process.

Interviews precede confirmation of enrolment at the College. All children seeking enrolment are to attend the interview with their parents. It is preferable for both parents to attend, but the College understands that may not be possible due to work commitments. The interview will be with the Principal or a senior member of staff delegated by the Principal.

d. Disclosure of Information

Parents or guardians must advise the Principal of any standing Court Order that exist, or any that may arise. If matters of custody are in place, documentation must be produced. Nationality and/or residential visa status must be declared truthfully. Any intentional misinformation on any matter will result in closure of the application.

e. Purpose of the Enrolment Interview

The main purpose of the interview from the perspective of the parents is to confirm that the vision, values, Christ-centred focus, and policies of the College align with their hopes and expectations for their children’s schooling. The parents will be seeking to confirm that Melton Christian College is the right school for their family to partner with over their children’s education; long term.

The main purpose of the interview from the perspective of the Principal (or delegate) is to establish that the expectations and commitments of the parents are consistent with the vision, values, Christ-centred focus, and policies of the College. The Principal will be seeking to confirm that the interviewees are a family ready to partner gladly with the College, and uphold supportive partnership for the duration of their children’s schooling.

The Principal will also inform the prospective parents of their responsibility to the College in relation to fees and will attempt to ascertain their ability to afford the current fees.

f. Financial Interview Procedure and Purpose

At the discretion of the Principal, a financial interview with the College’s Business Manager or Accountant may be required as a step in the application process. The aim of this interview is to help ascertain a family’s financial capacity to meet the fees and charges, and also to inform parents of various financial matters and potential fee payment arrangements.

The Financial Interview is not to be seen as a negative element of the process. The sole purpose of the interview is to help a family realistically assess their capacity to enter a commitment to the College’s fee schedule. It would be remiss of the College to invite a family to enrol their children if it becomes clear that they will simply be accumulating an unpayable debt. Accumulating a debt would mean that the children’s enrolment status would soon be withdrawn as a result of non-payment. The College is committed to protecting children’s wellbeing, so both scenarios: accumulating debt, and compulsorily ended enrolment as a result of unpaid fees are to be precluded out of consideration for the family. Obviously the Principal as a manager has a dual duty to protect the College from unrecoverable debt. The results of the financial interview are held in confidence.

4. Fee Concessions

It is the College's policy that fee concessions are not offered at the beginning of enrolment.

5. Waiting Lists

a. General Information on Waiting Lists

The Registrar reports to the Principal on the updating of class lists as well as maintaining application waiting lists for enrolment. In instances where an enrolment application has been assessed, but no vacancy exists at the appropriate year level, a student's name may be placed on a waiting list pending a vacancy becoming available.

Parents are asked to update the College should they have reason to withdraw their application. Placement on waiting lists does not guarantee an offer of enrolment, nonetheless, every effort is made to stay in contact with families regarding the likelihood of a place becoming available.

b. Selection Criteria and Waiting Lists

The management of enrolment waiting lists is at the discretion of the College. There are criteria that the College applies to the selection process. These criteria may include:

- Children coming to the College from another Christian school
- Family members being siblings of current or past students of the College
- Parents being current employees of the College
- Parents being ministers or missionaries of recognised Christian churches
- Parents being past students of the College
- The date of lodgement of the Application (providing the family have not been offered previously and deferred to a later entry point)
- The expression of alignment with the Christian ethos of the College
- The indication of positive & practical support for the Christian ethos of the College

In considering the suitability of a student to join the MCC student body, depending on the child's age the College may also take into consideration:

- a record of contributing to the wider life of the student community at their previous school
- an evident desire to join the College
- evident willingness to contribute to the positive reputation of the College
- indicated ability to contribute constructively to the reputation of the College
- positive character and indications of respectfulness
- reported positive influence on other learners at their previous school

Notwithstanding that the student may qualify under the selection criteria above, at any point in the process, the Principal at their discretion may decide to proceed no further with the enrolment process.

6. Parent Partnership

A crucial purpose of the enrolment process is to ensure that the applicant family agree to support the Core Values and the foundational Christian ethos of the College. The Principal and College Council are bound to maintain the Core Values and Christian ethos of the College, and the various elements of the enrolment process lead towards establishing a commitment from the parents to jointly support this objective.

Important questions for the parents to ask themselves are:

- “Is MCC a school that we will partner with wholeheartedly and long-term?”
- “Will we be positive supporters of the vision of this school?”
- “Are we ready to endorse the teachers and stay in constructive communication with them?”
- “Are we able to commit to staying up-to-date with the school fees?”
- “Even if there are misunderstandings, are we committed to working collaboratively to seek win-win solutions?”
- “Are we willing and able to endorse the Christian doctrine expressed by the College?”

7. An Offer of a Place is at the College’s Discretion

The College reserves the right not to offer any student a place at the College, or to defer the offer of a place to any student at its discretion.

An offer of a place will not be made if the parents, having been aware of their child’s specific educational needs, decline to declare those needs or withhold other relevant information pertaining to their child.

Similarly, the College also reserves the right to withhold, withdraw or cancel an offer, (even after enrolment has commenced) where the parents have not declared or have withheld known information pertaining to their child and significantly pertinent to their child’s schooling.

Other factors that could lead the College to withhold, withdraw or cancel an offer include:

- any factors that indicate that the student’s enrolment at the College is likely to be detrimental to other students, the staff or the College
- where information is obtained suggesting a history of misconduct, illegal activities or anti-social behaviours on the part of either the student or their parent(s)
- where it is clear that the parents will not be able to meet the financial commitment required by having a student at the College
- where the parents are suspected of having a history of adversarial conduct towards a school
- where the parents have a history of non-payment of fees or other charges at a school

In the case of a student whose level of English language may be inadequate to undertake the rigours of study, parents and staff are to collaborate to decide if enrolment at this point in time is in the best interests of the child, or whether specialised English as an additional language schooling may be needed before joining a mainstream school.

8. Determination of Enrolment

a. Offer of an Enrolment Place

At the satisfactory conclusion of the interview process, the College may make an offer to the parents to enrol their children. This offer will be made in writing by a Letter of Offer. Parents will also receive the College's current Conditions of Enrolment. To accept the offer, the parents must deliver two items to the College within 14 days of receiving it the offer, these are:

1. the Acceptance Form which includes acceptance by the parents of the then current Conditions of Enrolment
2. the non-refundable Enrolment Fee

Commencement may be possible at any time throughout the school year depending on circumstances.

b. Provisional Offer of a Place

Sometimes there may be financial circumstances that make the Principal hesitant to immediately offer an enrolment place. As said elsewhere in this policy, the hesitation to offer a place is out of consideration for the financial protection of the family, not only of the College. In such circumstances, rather than outright declining an enrolment, a Provisional Offer may be made to the family for a set period of time.

Thus, a Provisional Offer is a temporary arrangement which allows a family to retain an offer of a place while they seek to meet certain criteria. This scenario is uncommon but is a gesture to families where there are reasons that an offer would otherwise be withheld or withdrawn. The conditions of a provisional enrolment will be given to the prospective parents in writing. If the conditions are not met or are unable to be met then either the parents or the Principal may terminate the Provisional Offer with seven days' notice. In that case, enrolment deposits will be refunded and/or, if enrolment actually commenced, fees will be adjusted to cover the period of enrolment only. No early withdrawal penalties will apply.

9. Disability

a. Enrolment of Students with Disabilities

The School will not discriminate against a student's enrolment on the basis of disability, impairment or intellectual limitations. In such cases the College may:

- request certified medical evidence of the student's condition or need
- seek permission to communicate with the student's previous school to ascertain how the needs were managed previously

- seek to clarify if the student will receive funding to enhance further the learning support offered to them (students with special/particular needs)
- conduct meeting or meetings with parents to gain a clear picture of the student's needs so that the School may deliver the parameters of the program it feels it is able to provide in the light of parents' hopes and wishes
- prior to commencement arrive at a mutual agreement with parents on the support/program to be offered by the school

b. Disability and Required Measures

Where a student has a disability the College will assess the student's needs. This will include collaboration and consultation with the parents and if appropriate, the student. On this basis, the Principal, represented by the Education Support Coordinator will determine what measures would be needed to assist the student to participate in College programs and use College facilities.

The College will seek to identify whether those measures required are reasonable, especially in relation to allowing unimpeded schooling for all currently enrolled students. In assessing whether a particular measure for a particular student is reasonable, the College will comply with the standards outlined in the Disability Standards for Education (Cth) 2005.

The Principal may determine that the enrolment of the student would require the College to take unreasonable measures to ensure that the student is able to participate in College programs, and use College facilities. In that scenario, the Principal may decline the offer of a position or defer the offer.

10. Policy Exceptions

While this enrolment policy is as comprehensive as possible, there will inevitably be some situations which are not specifically covered. In such instances, the College retains the right that it is the Principal's responsibility, discretion and prerogative to decide the appropriate course to take in the circumstances.