

Enrolment Policy

Purpose

Gisborne Montessori School is committed to ensuring that students are enrolled in the school in a manner that is fair and transparent. In achieving this standard, the school will ensure comprehensive and accurate information is provided to parents as they enter into an enrolment agreement or contract with the school.

The school is committed to maintaining accurate records that comply with the school's legal obligations in relation to school enrolment.

The enrolment policy sets out the principles and framework governing the basis on which students are admitted to the school. The policy, together with the policy implementation documents listed in section 10, should be read and understood by parents and those responsible for implementing the policy.

The school is committed to ensuring students are admitted to the school in a manner that is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory.

The school will publish clear criteria as the basis on which admissions are made.

The school will provide comprehensive and accurate information about the enrolment process including information about the school, the school's service provision and the school's expectations of parental and student behaviour, so that parents are in a position to make informed choices when entering into an enrolment agreement or contract.

Gisborne Montessori School values diversity across the school community and this principle shapes the way in which the school's admissions criteria are applied.

The school keeps and retains accurate records of school enrolments that comply with its commonwealth and state legal and regulatory requirements.

Aims of the policy

The aim of the policy is to;

- ensure admission to the school is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory.
- explain clearly the basis on which offers of admission are made.
- specify the information that parents must have when entering an enrolment agreement or contract.
- comply with the requirements of Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.) and other relevant legislation.
- comply with the requirements of Australian Consumer Law¹.

Legal and regulatory basis for compliance

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.)

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards
Equal Opportunity Act (Vic.) 2010
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth.)
Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth.)
Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth.)
Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth.).

Key definitions

The school must make publicly available a copy of its enrolment agreement which is the contract for services between the school and the parent(s) and which the school and all parents must enter into when enrolling their child(ren) in the school.

The enrolment agreement is legally enforceable and codifies the arrangements whereby the parent purchases specified services in relation to the student in return for the payment of fees. In essence, the enrolment agreement is the legal contract for services between the school and the parent. The terms and conditions contained within the contract set out the rights and responsibilities of each party to the contract.

The enrolment agreement includes the following which can be found on the website:

- codes of conduct for students and parents which set out expectations of behaviour and engagement
- detailed information about fees including additional charges, how fees are collected, how fee levels are changed, processes for managing the non-payment of fees, etc.
- the grounds on which the agreement may be terminated.

The enrolment agreement is separate from the admissions policy and from the enrolment application form.

The enrolment register is a permanent record of the students admitted to the school. The school is required to implement processes and procedures to ensure that the register is up to date and this is done through SAS. The enrolment register determines those students for whom attendance must be registered and monitored.

If Gisborne Montessori School is oversubscribed in one or more age groups, we maintain a waiting list. The principles of fairness and transparency that apply throughout the enrolment policy also apply to the procedures relating to the management of the waiting list.

The school is required to obtain proof of age and enrolment name for each enrolment. Such documentation could be in the form of a birth certificate or passport.

Under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth.) schools are required to collect Student Background Characteristics Data as part of the school enrolment process and report the data to the VCAA or other testing agent when requested. This data is collected via our enrolment forms.

Records of enrolment are required for annual data returns for the Australian Government non-government schools and the Victorian school census under Australian Education Regulation 2013 (s.77).

Schools are required to request and record the immunisation status, called the Child History Statement, for each primary student prior to enrolment.

Schools are required to request and record the visa status when enrolling a student on a visa, that is any student who holds, or is a dependent of a person who holds, a permanent, bridging or temporary visa.

Schools are also required to request and record the visa status when enrolling overseas students (formerly known as full fee paying overseas students (FFPOS) who are those who hold a visa that is specifically related to studying in Australia, or a bridging visa attached to a substantive visa with those provisions.

Students attending the school on a cultural visit enter Australia on a tourist visa, are visitors to the school and are not enrolled students.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for;

- authorising the enrolment policy and for approving the criteria for admission.
- approving the terms and conditions contained within the enrolment agreement.

The Principal/Executive Director is responsible for ensuring;

- the implementation of the enrolment policy is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory.
- enrolment agreements are publicly available and that they are administered and recorded accurately.
- an enrolment register [and waiting list] is accurately maintained.
- this policy is implemented in accordance with commonwealth and state privacy legislation.
- procedures are implemented so that parents are guided through the enrolment process from enquiry to admissions
- procedures are in place for the management, storage and retrieval of enrolment data:
- proof of the child's identity, specifically date of birth and enrolment name
- immunisation status
- visa status (if applicable)
- the school reports data relating to the characteristics of students at the school to the school community at least once a year to the VRQA and other Government bodies as required by law.

Communication of the policy

The school publishes its enrolment policy and admissions criteria on its website and by application to the school office.

The school publishes for parents the procedures by which a student is admitted to the school on its website and by application to the school office.

The school publishes the enrolment agreement on its website and by application to the school office.

Policy implementation documents

The documents setting out the strategies and actions required to implement this policy are:

- appendix setting out the criteria that will be used as the basis on which offers of admission are made
- detailed procedures for managing the process of enquiries and enrolments
- detailed procedures for recording enrolments
- detailed procedures for managing the waiting list.

Admissions criteria

Gisborne Montessori School adheres to the following criteria, with first preference given to:

- siblings of a child already in the school
- the child of an alumni student
- a child who has attended another Montessori school
- position on the waiting list (based on date of application)
- age
- maximum numbers of students in any class (dependent on Department minimum square meterage per child). Our maximum per class is 28 students.

Criteria that seek to rely on evidence of attitude and ability:

- The school may require a reference from a student's previous school that could address issues as:
 - i. prior academic achievements,
 - ii. behaviour and attitude or
 - iii. contribution to the life of the school. The reference may use a standard format or may invite a free form letter of support.

- Gisborne Montessori School requires an interview with either parents or the student or both as part of its admissions procedures.
- We will require prospective students who have already been enrolled in another school to attend some form of trial period, the purpose of which is to give the student an opportunity to get to know the school but also to allow the school to observe the student and for the school to use those observations as evidence of attitude and/or ability.

How the admissions criteria will be applied

'Catch all' statement

Gisborne Montessori School chooses to use a 'catch all' statement that permits the Principal/Executive Director to retain the discretion to make a final decision. It is important that any decision made using such discretionary powers is not arbitrary but is capable of being explained rationally and is well documented.

Gisborne Montessori School also retains the right to making decisions on the basis of whether the school judges that it can meet the needs of the student.

References

ISV Model Policy
 Code of Conduct
 Attendance Policy
 Privacy Policy
 Record Management Policy
 Complaints Policy.

Details

Created	June 2019
Maintained	Principal/Executive Director and Gisborne Montessori School Board
Reviewed	2022 – Major review delayed until 2023
Authorised	Gisborne Montessori School Board of Management
Next Review	2023