



# St Mary's College Enrolment Policies and Procedures



## POLICY

St Mary's College will seek to enrol students, who with their parents and caregivers, can commit to the values and expectations of our Catholic, Christian community.

## Rationale

The Archdiocese of Brisbane Catholic Education Council provides a clear policy on the Enrolment of Students (July 2012) in Catholic Schools. It states that schools in the Archdiocese give priority in enrolment to students who are baptised Catholics. Schools may also enrol students from other faith traditions whose families demonstrate that they share in the expressed values of the school. In such instance's schools embrace church teachings regarding respect for the dimension of the school life.

## Introduction

St Mary's College is a Catholic, secondary school for girls established in 1863 by the Sisters of Mercy and is committed to the provision of high quality, inclusive and affordable Catholic education. It has an important partnership role with parents from surrounding parishes, in the provision of a secondary education for Catholic families and for those families who share in its values. The College invites enrolments from all who profess to share in the College spirit, ethos and values and who can demonstrate such support through the ways in which they currently interact within their existing parishes, religious communities, local communities and primary schools.

## Guidelines

The process of enrolment is guided by principles of justice and equity which is reflective of our Catholic ethos and vision.

To maintain the Catholicity of the school community, applications will be prioritized in this order:

1. Catholic students from other Catholic schools, with a priority given to those students from St Mary's Primary and local Catholic feeder primary schools.
2. Catholic students from other schools.
3. Non-catholic students from St Mary's Primary or other Catholic schools, with a priority given to those students from local Catholic feeder primary school.
4. Non-catholic students whose parents show a genuine commitment to the ethos and values of the College.

It should be noted that being a sister of a present or past student or a daughter of a past student of the College could alter these priorities.

Consideration will also be given to the proportion of students enrolled other than Catholic, as this should not jeopardise the Catholic identity of the school community. Such students should not be enrolled if these enrolments necessitate the exclusion or likely exclusion of Catholic students seeking enrolment. However, timing of the application is important and late applications from Catholic students could also mean that all places have already been filled.



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## Making an Application for Enrolment

All applicants to St Mary's College need to be aware of the culture and ethos of the college as a Catholic school. As per the Catholic Education Policy, they must express a desire and willingness to:

- Share in the expressed values of the school
- Contribute positively and actively to enhance the spiritual life of the school
- Commit to and support the College policies and procedures
- Be prepared to work in partnership with the College staff

Enrolment application is completed online, via the College Website. Parents will complete this form and pay the Enrolment Application Fee. The following paperwork is also required:

- Child's Birth Certificate (the original must be sighted at Interview); and
- Copy of Baptism Certificate and any other paperwork related to the child's sacramental program (if applicable); and
- Evidence of child's participation in her current school including school reports and other relevant information to support enrolment.

## Interview Process

On receiving a completed Enrolment Application, the College will process the enrolment in a timely manner. Once the application is complete, parents and the child will be invited to attend an interview with a member of the College Leadership Team, or person nominated by the College Principal. The interview process will be used to establish with parents the expectations upon students and families to participate in the life of the Catholic school community. Discussion will also occur around the compulsory formal Religious Education classroom program. The religious life of the College, including prayer and worship and any social justice and service programs, are similarly discussed regarding expectations to participate.

Following the interview, it will be at the discretion of the Principal as to whether a place can be offered. This will be based on information gathered through the application and interview, considering factors such as, a student's spiritual, educational and behavioral history, as well as a student's potential contribution to the school, and of course, the availability of a place.

An offer of placement is conditional upon acceptance by parents/caregivers of the College Policies and Guidelines which govern school practices. This includes an acceptance of the College Fees Policy.

Interviews will be conducted when the student is in Year 5 or 6 but may occur at any time prior to commencement given individual circumstances.

## Finalising the enrolment

Each decision of acceptance of an applicant for enrolment shall be at the discretion of the Principal within the policy and guidelines endorsed by the College Board, and in line with Brisbane Catholic Education enrolment guidelines. A letter notifying parents of the outcome will be forwarded within two months of the interview. If there is a letter of offer, enrolment will only be confirmed upon the completion of the Confirmation of Offer and payment of the Enrolment Confirmation Bond. It should be noted that the letter of offer is only valid for a maximum of two months from the date of offer.



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The Enrolment Confirmation Bond is non-refundable if the student does not take up the place. The Confirmation of Offer includes an indication that the applicant can make full and regular payment of College Fees and Levies. Students who are not offered an enrolment initially may be placed on the Enrolment Waiting List.

It is the expectation of St Mary's College that students will be enrolled under the name given on their Birth Certificate, unless parents or legal guardians can produce a document demonstrating that the child's name has been legally changed. However, the enrolling parent may direct for the child to be "*known by*" another name whilst at school, provided that the Principal is satisfied such an action is not intended to defraud, to contravene a court order or to infringe the rights of the other parent. In these circumstances, all informal school records, e.g. the attendance roll for each class or merit awards will reflect the other name. All formal school records, e.g. enrolment documents, school photos and school reports will reflect the child's name as shown on the birth certificate.

The decision as to whether to permit a child to be known at school by a name other than that on the birth certificate is one which is made by the Principal based on the unique facts of each case. Parents would make this request in writing addressed to the Principal to be filed with the enrolment paperwork.

Inaccurate information supplied to the College or nondisclosure of information may lead to the cancellation of offer and / or enrolment.

## **Students requiring Significant Educational Adjustments**

St Mary's College recognises that there are students with special needs, and endeavours, as far as possible, given the available resources, to enhance and support the learning of all students. Enrolment of students requiring significant educational adjustments will proceed according to guidelines set down by Brisbane Catholic Education and the Enrolment Support Process. This process is commenced at the discretion of the principal and is managed by the Support Teacher: Inclusive Education and other support staff, such as the Guidance Counsellor. If special needs become apparent after enrolment, the process may be started at any time.

Parents need to be aware this process can take considerably more time, as an individual learning plan is developed and shared with all stakeholders.

It is the responsibility of parents to disclose all relevant information regarding a child's special needs at the time of making application for enrolment.

## **Changes in family circumstances**

The College recognises that changes may occur with family living arrangements over the six years their daughter attends the College. In the situation where a change in the student's living situation occurs, the College should be notified of such changes. Should this change involve a separation of parents, the College should be informed of any change of address and, where relevant, of the details of any parenting plan which is in place. A clear understanding of issues associated with access to the student and to information about the student should be established at this point.



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## References

*This policy has been written with reference to the following documents, which should be referred to in cases where further clarification is required:*

*Enrolment of Students (July 2012), Archdiocese of Brisbane Catholic Education Council*

*205.2 Enrolment of Students – Secondary (June 2005), Brisbane Catholic Education*

*205.3 Enrolment of Students (Draft February 2008), Brisbane Catholic Education 206*

*Enrolment Application and Support Procedures for Students with Special Educational Needs (January 2007), Brisbane Catholic Education*