



Catholic Education
Diocese of Cairns
*Learning with Faith
and Vision*

Policy

Policy no:	
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Author:	MES, Executive

Enrolment of students in Catholic Schools

Purpose

This policy provides direction to schools in the development and implementation of school enrolment policies and guidelines.

Policy

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Cairns welcome all who genuinely seek to participate positively in the life of the local Catholic community, and in the Church's evolving mission in the world.

In seeking this participation, all who join the school community demonstrate a commitment to further understand, and support the values of the Catholic tradition, and to continue life's journey in, and respect for Gospel values which are at the heart of Catholic beliefs and practices.

Sharing these commitments and responsibilities is a condition of enrolment.

No child will be denied a place in a Catholic school because of genuine financial hardship.

Schools will actively support families who seek spiritual and pastoral care.

Rationale

Historically, Catholic Schools in Australia were established for the specific purpose of educating children from Catholic families. Changing conditions today are influencing enrolment policy and practice in schools.

From the standpoint of faith, Christ's openness to all people, especially the disadvantaged and victims of prejudice, is the spirit that informs decisions about enrolment. It is this faith standpoint and changing conditions that create the need for schools to develop an evangelising role in addition to the catechetical role they have traditionally played as educators of Catholic children.

As the 'Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium' (1998) states, "...the Catholic school must be able to speak for itself effectively and convincingly. It is not merely a question of adaptation, but of missionary thrust, the fundamental duty is to evangelize, to go towards men and women wherever they are, so that they may receive the gift of salvation."

The Diocesan Board of Governance Education acknowledges the tension that this dual role creates and welcomes the dialogue that comes with it. The 'Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium' (1998) document has highlighted this issue when stating: "Catholic schools are ... places of evangelization, of complete formation, of inculturation, of apprenticeship, in lively dialogue between young

people of different religions and social backgrounds."

The intention of this policy is to ensure the interpretation of the Catholic identity of our schools is inclusive in nature, whilst, at the same time, continuing to be faithful to the original mission of Catholic schools to educate children of Catholic families.

Consequences

- Enrolment procedures at the diocesan and school level will reflect openness to all students whose parents/guardians are committed to further understand, support and live the values of the Catholic tradition.
- School Boards/Schools, in consultation with Parish Priests, will develop policies that reflect this Diocesan Policy.
- Schools will develop procedures for the implementation of their policy in accordance with any Diocesan implementation guidelines provided, and conform with current and relevant legislation.
- Consideration in enrolment priorities should be given to, in descending order of priority:
 - Persons who participate regularly in the celebration of the Eucharist;
 - Catholics who commit to the values of the Catholic church;
 - Siblings of existing student members of the community;
 - Participating members of other Christian churches;
 - Christians who commit to the values of the Catholic church;
 - Those persons not affiliated with any Christian church, who commit to the values of the Catholic church.
- At a school level, policy and guidelines should reflect:
 - Parents/guardians and students must be given adequate information about the Mission Statement and its application at the school;
 - Parents/guardians and students undertake to support school policies, behaviour expectations and education requirements consistent with a positive and supportive partnership between families and the school;
 - Families must make themselves aware of, endorse and where appropriate, undertake to participate in all activities of the school curriculum and community;
 - Families must undertake to contribute their time and support to the various active groups in the school community, for example, P & F meetings, fund-raising efforts and school maintenance activities;
 - Families must permit their child/children to take part in all the activities of the school, including all aspects of the formal religious education program, school liturgies and celebrations;
 - Parents/guardians must agree to pay in full, all fees and levies in accordance with the Fees Schedule detailed in the school Prospectus/Handbook, as a minimum contribution to the running of the school.
- Schools will develop procedures to inform their communities of special provisions for those in genuine hardship, and shall implement processes for fee relief that respect the dignity and privacy of families. Genuine hardship would generally be determined by an assessment of the family's income in relation to the poverty line.
- Schools, with the endorsement of the Executive Director, Catholic Education Services, may terminate an enrolment in situations where families are in material breach of their agreed obligations under the conditions of enrolment. Such provision would only be applied in extreme circumstances.
- Failure to meet the conditions of enrolment at one Catholic school, including the non payment of fees, may be used as grounds to decline enrolment at a new school. This consideration includes the transition from primary schools to secondary colleges. Principals should seek clearances from previous schools.

Reflection

The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium: Congregation for Catholic Education (1998)

The Catholic School: Congregation for Catholic Education (1977)

Declaration on Christian Education (Gravissimum Educationis) 1965

Educating Together in Catholic Schools (Congregation for Catholic Education) 2007

Defining Features (Cairns CES)

A Catholic School for your Child (CES)

See also (Related Policies and Guidelines)

Policies:

- Inclusive Practices
- Enrolling students with special needs
- Overseas students
- Dual enrolment
- Early enrolment

Guidelines:

- Cancellation of student enrolment
- Student enrolment form