



## Enrolment Policy

### Rationale

**Catholic education is intrinsic to the mission of the Church. It is one means by which the Church fulfils its role in assisting people to discover and embrace the fullness of life in Christ.**

The Australian bishops established Catholic schools in the 1860s as a key instrument of catechesis and sacramental preparation for Catholic children. Catholic schools continue to offer a broad, comprehensive curriculum imbued with an authentic Catholic understanding of Christ and his teaching, as well as a lived appreciation of membership of the Catholic Church. The Antonine Sisters seek to provide education specifically to Maronite Catholic students and work to support Our Lady of Lebanon Parish.

This policy is based on the Catholic Education Melbourne (CEM) Enrolment Policy which establishes that the first priority of a Catholic school is the provision of a Catholic education for Catholic children. This reflects the historical context of Catholic education in Australia, as well as confirming the participation of the Catholic school in the Church's mission. As a result, formation and education at Antonine College is based on the principles of Catholic doctrine.

This policy also supports the special relationship that continues to exist between the Maronite Catholic Eastern Church and other Eastern Catholic Churches and the non-Catholic Eastern Churches, based on a belief in the same sacraments and a close nexus in understanding about theology and sacraments.

### Principles

#### Inclusiveness

Antonine College has been established primarily for Maronite Catholic children and strives to be open and welcoming to all Catholic students, regardless of their background and needs, and do everything possible to accommodate a student's individual needs. The College extends particular assistance to children who are poor or disadvantaged or considered most at risk.

With a significant proportion of Catholic children in other than Catholic schools, it is important that strategies be developed to raise the percentage of Catholic children in the College. Then, if appropriate, the College welcomes children of other Christian traditions and other faiths who seek what Catholic education has to offer, with a priority given to children from other Eastern Catholic and non-Catholic Eastern Churches.

#### Partnership between parents and school

Parents, as the first educators of their children, enter into a partnership with Antonine College to promote and support their child's education, in particular their education in faith. While the College promotes access to a Catholic education, parents should also assume a responsibility for maintaining this partnership by supporting the College in furthering the spiritual and academic life of their children.

#### Exercise of pastoral discretion in enrolment decisions

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, Antonine College is able to exercise some flexibility with respect to enrolment decisions where pastoral discretion may be deemed necessary.



## Access to information about enrolment in a Catholic school

Information concerning the enrolment policy, enrolment criteria and processes are publicly available and easily accessible by current and prospective parents.

### Procedures

#### 1. College Enrolment Policy

This policy is accessible to parents or parents of prospective students via College website, or as requested.

#### 1. Achieving a High Level of Catholic Enrolment

Catholic schools are expected to maintain and/or work towards the highest possible level of Catholic enrolment. If the College does not have a high level of Catholic and non-Catholic Eastern Church enrolments, it will attempt to increase its percentage by establishing a realistic target and using CEM Procedures to Assist Schools to achieve a High Level of Catholic Enrolment available in CEM Policy 2.4.

#### 2. Enrolment Processes and Procedures in Schools

Information in local school enrolment policies about enrolment processes should be clear and unambiguous. The procedures should be comprehensive and cover all categories of enrolment including minimum school age entry. Attached to this policy is a flow chart outlining enrolment process and procedures.

#### 3. The Minimum Starting Age

The minimum starting age for a child to be enrolled in a Victorian school is four years and eight months, i.e. a child must turn five by 30 April in the year of starting school. The enrolment of students under the minimum starting age will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. In those situations where:

- I. a parent seeks enrolment of a child under the minimum starting age; and
  - II. the principal agrees to enrolling the child in the school if approval were granted, the approval of the Executive Director of Catholic Education is required, before enrolment under the minimum starting age can occur. The Application for Early Age Entry to School form will need to be submitted to the Executive Director by the principal for approval to be sought. Supporting documentation from educational professionals detailing substantive reasons for early school entry must be attached to the application.
- an IQ of 130+ (usually shown by a Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence™ - Fourth Edition (WPPSI™ - IV)
  - a statement from another appropriate professional stating that the child would be significantly disadvantaged if early entry was not approved
  - a letter from the parent(s) outlining their reasons for requesting an exemption from the policy. It is the responsibility of the parent/caregiver to provide all appropriate documentation to the principal for submission to the Executive Director for consideration. Approval for early age enrolment will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**.



#### **4. Students with Additional Learning Needs**

The College welcomes parents who wish to enrol a child with additional learning needs and will do everything possible to accommodate the child's needs. The process for enrolling students with special needs is the same as that for enrolling any student.

#### **5. Enrolment of Students from Interstate**

When enrolling students whose previous school was interstate, the College uses the protocols of the Interstate Student Data Transfer Note (ISDTN). This is a mandatory requirement of the Australian Government. It is the responsibility of the enrolling school to initiate and manage this process, and be sensitive to parent/student consent requirements for the provision of information. All relevant documents and information are available at the MCEETYA website <[www.mceetya.edu.au/transfernote](http://www.mceetya.edu.au/transfernote)>.

When enrolling students in Catholic schools the following legislation is to be considered:

- *The Victorian Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1996 (Vic).*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth).*
- *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cwlth)*