



Dorrigo Public School Enrolment Policy

Purpose: Legislation requires students between the ages of six and seventeen to be enrolled at a government school or registered non-government school and to attend school on each day that instruction is provided, or to be registered for home schooling. It is the duty of the parent of the student to ensure that these obligations are fulfilled.

Year: April 2017

Reference : Memorandum to Principals 97/257 “Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy.”
Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy.
Education Reform Act 1990

Aim:

For the school to follow procedures documented in: “Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy.” July 2009.

Guidelines and General Principles Governing Enrolment:

At Dorrigo Public School:

- A student is considered to be enrolled when he or she is placed on the admission register.
- A student should be enrolled in one school only at any given time.
- Children are entitled to be enrolled and are eligible to attend our government school if they reside in the designated intake area (the child’s home is situated inside the specified boundary).
- Parents may seek to enrol their child in the school of their choice.
- School local areas are determined by the Department of Education via a process of consultation between the Properties Directorate and the Director, Public Schools.
- Schools are required to set an enrolment number to cater for anticipated local demand and establish a buffer to ensure that every eligible local child has a place at his/her local school if he/she chooses to attend it.
- Dorrigo Public School has a written policy which states the grounds on which non-local enrolments will be accepted if places are available. It is reviewed annually.
- The policy and criteria should be expressed in plain English. It should be made clear what consideration will be given to each of the criteria.
- The primary criteria for acceptance of non-local enrolments will include the availability of appropriate staff and permanent classroom accommodation.

- No additional accommodation will be provided to cater for increased enrolments resulting from non-local placements.
- Within the enrolment ceiling, a buffer will be determined to accommodate local students arriving throughout the year. The size of the buffer will be based on historical data, on enrolment fluctuations and the number of families moving into or out of the area. Where spare accommodation exists, except for enrolments at the commencement of the school year, non-local placements must not generate demand for extra staff or create disruption to school routine.
- There will be a minimum period of 24 hours between application for enrolment and confirmation of enrolment to allow for contact to be made with the previous school and consideration of most appropriate placement of the student.
- In addition to these general principles, there are particular criteria for enrolment of students with special learning needs. The decision on where to enrol a student, and with what level of support, will depend on a number of factors, including a student's educational needs, the expressed desires of parents and caregivers, the capacity of the system to provide the level of support services required generally and at a particular location and the availability of support services at alternative locations.

Discrimination in Enrolment

- In the context of the above principles and their application, which clearly constrain an individual's choice of provision, no person will be discriminated against in enrolment on the grounds of their sex, age, race, religion, ethnicity, disability, sexual preference or marital status.

School Based procedures that have been developed in consultation with the Department of Education policy:

- Phone/Desk enquiries regarding proposed enrolments are referred in the first instance to the Office Staff for clarification and checking regarding non local enrolment, for the supply of information booklets and arrangement of appointments.
- Non local enrolment applications are referred to the principal and applications are considered according to policy. (See: "Non Local Placement Policy" and "Enrolment of Students in Government Schools: A summary and Consolidation of Policy" - Aug. 97)
- The Principal is available for support and clarification of all enrolment procedures.
- Incoming (mostly local schools) whole Kindergarten student enrolment procedures and orientation are completed by the Principal and Office Staff.
- All enrolment procedures occur following interview with the Principal.

Matters include:

- School welcome
- School organisation e.g. Uniform Policy, Discipline Policy, bell times, school map, newsletter.
- Class placement considerations.

- Clearance from previous school - transfer certificate/phone previous school, suspension history etc.
- Special Education enrolment provisions - referrals to specialist support.
- Collation of background history - academic, family, social/emotional development, health, sport, AVO's, court agreements (sight, request cope of access documents).
- Proof of age - sight Birth Certificate or Passport.
- Vaccinations - sight copy of certificates.
- Welfare/Learning support referral when required.
- Enrolment form to be completed.
- Travel details.
- Fees schedule.

Administrative support to be provided by Office Staff

- Welcome new enrolments.
- Determine a schedule of appointments with parents/guardians, and/or Principal.
- Maintain supply of enrolment, policies to be distributed to new enrolments, information booklets.
- Check completed enrolment forms supplied by the Principal and file.
- Gather and collate information and records.
- Enter re-enrolment information.
- Request and file student record cards.
- Supply and process application forms.
- Allocate student to roll group upon decision from Principal.
- Enrolment return support is provided by Office Staff.

Enrolment Ceiling

- Dorrigo Public School has an enrolment ceiling based on permanent accommodation of 12 classrooms. The enrolment ceiling is set at 308 students.
- When student enrolment has exceeded the enrolment ceiling based on permanent teaching spaces, the school is unable to accept the enrolment of any non-local enrolments including siblings.

Non-local Enrolment Applications

- Enrolment of students from outside the school's designated local enrolment area should not result in the demand for extra staff and/or the reorganization of classes during the year.
- A 5% enrolment buffer will be held for local enrolments with a waiting list established each year if necessary. To maintain current class structure and teaching staff at Dorrigo PS during 2017, the enrolment buffer is 5 students. Places in the buffer are not offered to non-local enrolments. The buffer zone will be reassessed on an annual basis.

Criteria for Non-local Enrolment Applications:

Non-local placements will not be considered if they generate a demand for extra staff or create disruption to school routine. Criteria for selecting amongst non-local enrolment applications should be documented and made available, in advance, to parents who are interested in enrolling their children.

Criteria:

- proximity and access to the school;
- siblings already enrolled at the school or having had siblings enrolled at the school;
- plans to build within the schools local area;
- medical reasons;
- safety and supervision of students before and after school;
- student welfare needs;
- particular discipline procedures;
- compassionate circumstances; or
- move from Non-government school.

The principal will ensure that the established criteria for the school are applied equitably to all applicants.

Placement Panel

When a situation exists where the request for non-local placements exceeds availability a placement panel will be convened to consider and make recommendations on all non-local applications.

The composition of the panel will be:

- The principal - chair + casting vote.
- A school community member.
- One staff member.

The recommendations made by the placement panel must be within the context of the agreed enrolment ceiling and the buffer retained for local students arriving later in the year.

In assessing the application of the criteria to individual cases, the panel will consider only those matters presented on the application form and not oral or other submissions.

The placement panel should record all decisions and minutes of meetings are to be available on request by the Director, Public Schools.

Parents should be provided with an explanation of the decisions of the placement panel in writing should they request it.

Waiting Lists:

A waiting list will be established for non-local placements. Parents will be advised in writing if their child is to be placed on a waiting list and his or her position on it. The size of the waiting list will reflect realistic expectations of potential vacancies. The waiting list will remain current for one year.

Appeals:

Where a parent wishes to appeal against a decision of the placement panel, the appeal should be made in writing to the principal. The principal will attempt to resolve the situation.

If the matter is not resolved at the local level the Director for Public Schools will consider the appeal and make a determination. The Director for Public Schools will consult with the relevant principals and school communities as necessary.

The purpose of the appeal is to determine whether the stated criteria in the school policy have been applied fairly.

Procedures for Enrolment in Particular Circumstances

Transition to School

It is recognised that the transition from early intervention, or other pre-school settings, to school is a significant step, particularly for students with special learning needs. Schools are encouraged to work collaboratively with parents, caregivers and other relevant personnel to facilitate planning for the important transition process. Advice and assistance to support schools in this regard are available through specialist district personnel, such as the special education consultant, the early learning program co-ordinator and itinerant support teacher, early intervention.

Kindergarten Enrolment

The principal will advise the parent body and the school community of the enrolment arrangements for the next year's Kindergarten children, including the policy on immunisation. Children may enrol in Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year if they turn five years of age on or before 31 July in that year.

Documentation providing proof of age, such as a birth certificate or passport, is required on enrolment. The enrolment of eligible children in the Kindergarten year is to commence within the first week of the school year.

The principal is to ensure that enrolments proceed as quickly as possible in a manner which is in the best interests of the incoming children.

The principal will enrol in Kindergarten, students on transfer and children reaching the statutory age of six years.

Early Enrolment of Students who are Gifted and Talented

Our school provides a range of opportunities for their gifted and talented students. Early entry to school of a student who is intellectually gifted and talented is appropriate to meet the student's educational, social and emotional needs and will be implemented at Dorrigo Public School.

When a student is being considered for early entry to Kindergarten, the school will carry out a comprehensive evaluation of intellectual functioning, academic skills and social-emotional adjustment. This should be undertaken by the school counsellor or a registered psychologist. Judgements about the student's emotional maturity should include input from the student's parents and the school counsellor or psychologist.

For more detail on this matter, principals and parents should refer to the *Policy for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students*.

Those considering early enrolment may wish to note that a review of the research reveals a consensus that, for successful outcomes, a child should be within six months of approved entry age.

Enrolment of Non-Australian Citizens

Non-Australian citizens entering Australia must hold a valid visa and are subject to the specific travel, entry and residency conditions set by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA). Education is compulsory for non-Australian citizens between the ages of six and fifteen holding a visa granting them permanent resident status and New Zealand citizens holding current New Zealand passports. Outside these ages they may enrol under the same conditions as Australian citizens. Non-Australian citizens holding a temporary visa are subject to specific enrolment conditions as outlined below:

Temporary Residents

The temporary resident visa allows for the enrolment on a temporary basis of school aged students in a New South Wales government school. Enrolment is only for the period specified on the visa.

Visitor Visas

Visitor Visas include business visitors, medical treatment visitors and tourists. A student on a visitor visa may be able to enroll for a maximum period of three months which cannot be extended. Students on visitor visas must arrange their enrolment through the DoE's International Student Programs.

Under Commonwealth Government regulations, international students holding temporary visas have a lower enrolment priority than Australian citizens, permanent residents and approved temporary residents. If students on visitor visas directly approach a school, they should be referred to International Student Programs for their application to be evaluated. All enquirers should be advised that tuition fees are likely to apply.

Bridging Visas

Non-Australian citizens are granted a bridging visa if they have an undetermined application for a substantive visa before the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA). Bridging visas come into effect when the initial substantive visa has expired. Prospective students on bridging visas may be enrolled if the visa states that the holder has work rights.

Transfer Applications

Students from other government or non-government schools, interstate and New Zealand may be enrolled by their local or non-local school consistent with this policy. The assistance of the school counsellor may be required to establish the appropriate year and level of study.

Provisions for students transferring from one state to another- where it can be demonstrated that a child has been enrolled in a formal education program in one state and would be disadvantaged, on transfer, by not being permitted to enroll under the policy of the other State, consideration for enrolment must be given.

When students transfer from one New South Wales government school to another, a Student Transfer Certificate must be completed.

Principals should make every effort to secure the transfer certificates for transferring students from government schools. This will ensure that no student is enrolled in more than one school at any one time and that student movement is effectively monitored. (*School Attendance, Policy and Procedures*).

Short Term and Part-time Attendance of Students

A student should be enrolled in one school only at any given time. For a variety of reasons, such as parents visiting a locality for a brief period or a student being involved in an integration program, a student enrolled at a particular school may need to attend another school for a short period of time.

Where this period is no more than one term, or in the case of a student involved in a special placement of no more than 2.5 days per week, the student should not be enrolled, but regarded as being on a short term attendance. The home school should maintain the student's name on an attendance register, with a note to the effect that the student is attending another school. The school the student attends for a short term (the host school), must keep a record of the student's attendance and notify the home school at the end of the stay or, in the case of part-time attendance, at the end of each term.

Specialised Programs

For various reasons a student enrolled at a particular school may need to attend a specialised program at another school or support unit for a period of time or part time. Such programs include support classes for students with behaviour disorders and emotional disturbance, hospital schools and students visiting Stewart House or the Royal Far West School.

Part-time Enrolment

Students are generally enrolled in a school on a full-time basis. Part-time enrolment, however, is possible in some situations, including:

- * students who undertake some of their studies external to the school
- * students with medical conditions enrolling in distance education (medical documentation must be provided).

Students seeking to enrol part-time should consult the principal.

Home Schooling

A parent of a child may apply in writing to the Minister for registration of the child for home schooling.

A Board of Studies inspector or other authorised person under the *Education Reform Act 1990* will recommend to the Minister to register, or not register, a child for home schooling. Parents can appeal to the *Schools Appeals Tribunal* against a recommendation not to register. Refer to *Education Reform Act 1990* Part 7, pages 29-35.

Refusal of Enrolment

Principals may refuse enrolment of a student on the grounds of previously documented violent behaviour if there is evidence that the student has not learned the appropriate skills to manage this behaviour.

Enrolment Data

Information needs to be recorded about each student enrolled at the school:

- to comply with legal requirements
- for school administrative purposes and
- for resourcing, accountability and reporting requirements.

Enrolment Forms

Enrolment forms are used for collecting the required information from parents. Parents' signatures are required on the forms to certify that the information provided is correct. To assist families and school staff members responsible for enrolment, the Department has produced bilingual student enrolment forms.

Register of Enrolment

The *Education Reform Act 1990* states that schools *must keep a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments ... of all children at the school (Page 12, Section 24).*

An effective enrolment register must include as a minimum:

- the student's name and address
- birth date, gender and country of birth
- parent or caregiver's details
- the date the student enrolled at the school and the class entered
- the date the student leaves, or transfers from, the school.

Recording of students within OASIS is the Department's recommended means for maintaining an enrolment register.

Students attending the school on a short-term (less than one term) or temporary basis should not be enrolled, and may only be entered on OASIS if they can be distinguished from regular enrolments. Such students should maintain their enrolment at their home school for the duration of their short-term or temporary placement.

Resourcing, Accountability and Reporting

The enrolment return submitted by schools in February each year forms the basis for the calculation of schools' staffing entitlements and global funding.

Principals have an obligation to ensure that the enrolment information on the return is complete and supported by adequate enrolment and attendance documentation to meet accountability and audit requirements.

Principals are responsible for certifying the accuracy of the school enrolment return and must ensure that the students included in the return are those:

- present on the day of the completion of the return,
- although absent from the school on the day, have had some attendance in the current year and have not informed the school that they are leaving or
- although absent from school on the day, advice in writing has been received from the parent or guardian, or formal record of parent interview, to state that the student will be returning before the conclusion of term one.

Other enrolment information, including age/grade, NESB and ATSI data, provided on the Term 1 and Mid-year census, provides data for resourcing for specific programs, obtaining Commonwealth funding and national reporting.

Student enrolment information and the enrolment returns are subject to regular review as part of the school audit process by the Audit Directorate.

Enrolment of Students with Special Learning Needs

Students with Disabilities

The Department of Education provides a range of services and resources to support the education of students with disabilities. These include:

- targeted funding, specialist teachers and consultancy services to support students enrolled in regular classes
- special classes within regular schools
- special schools
- modifications to buildings to facilitate access
- provision of specialised equipment and technology and
- special transport services.

When considering the enrolment of a student with a disability, all provisions should be considered.

The decision on where to enroll a student with a disability, and with what level of support, will depend on a number of factors, including the student's educational needs, the expressed desires of parents and caregivers, the capacity of the system to provide the level of support services required generally and at a particular location, the meeting of WH&S regulations and the availability of support services at alternative locations.

In many situations it will be possible to enroll a student with a disability at the desired school with the necessary level of specialist support. In some circumstances the level of support required, or the specialist nature of that support, will necessitate alternative enrolment options being provided.

In each case, when a student with a disability presents for enrolment at Dorrigo Public School, the Principal will ensure that an appraisal of the student's educational needs is carried out. For some students appraisal will have occurred as part of a planned transition process. For others, the appraisal will take place at the time enrolment is sought.

Appraisals will involve parents or caregivers and will entail consideration of the student's support needs in areas such as curriculum, mobility, social skills, personal care and communication. It will often involve consideration of supporting documentation from medical practitioners and other health and education professionals. District special education consultants are available to assist in this process, in particular, to identify the resources which may be available to support the enrolment.

Requests for enrolment in special classes or special schools are considered by a district placement panel.

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The purpose of the appeal is to determine whether the stated criteria in the school policy have been applied fairly.

Evaluation:

Enrolments and transfer procedures followed as per DET requirements.

Reference:

Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy. July 2009.