



College Guideline

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Enrolment Procedure

Purpose

This procedure provides a process for enrolling students at Mount St Bernard College.

The intention of this procedure 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 Mount St Bernard College to educate children of Catholic families.

Procedure

Mount St Bernard College welcome students of the Catholic faith and 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. For those who come from other faith or religious backgrounds there is an expectation that students and their families will respect the school's Catholic beliefs, rituals and values.

In our outreach role Mount St Bernard College will serve the needs of those families who will benefit from our service. This will include those from culturally diverse backgrounds including First Nations peoples, opportunities for those who seek to deepen their faith in a Catholic context, those from backgrounds of marginalization and disadvantage including the economically and spiritually poor, and those with diverse needs.

In seeking this participation, all who join the Mount St Bernard College 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.

This policy is set against a background where many Catholic schools in the Diocese of Cairns have waiting lists because of a high demand for limited places. While every effort will be made to accommodate enrolments that fulfil the policy criteria, there will be occasions where students who otherwise meet the criteria for enrolment may not be offered a place. This outcome is regretted but will continue to be a factor in determining enrolments until additional capacity can be achieved.

Our Commitment

Mount St Bernard College has been established for the specific purpose of educating children from Catholic families. However, the modern Catholic school also has a function in engaging the broader community in the mission of the Church. For example, the 'Dialogue School' identified in the Catholic School Identity Program ('Leuven program') envisages a multicultural and multifaith school population that shows an openness for what Christianity might have to offer. Such a school is challenged to be in the service of all young people regardless of their cultural background or religion, and in matters of both education and spiritual formation, Mount St Bernard College provides a service to society.

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, "...Mount St Bernard College 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."

Procedures

1. Enrolment information will be made available to families on the College website and available to interested families in a hardcopy enrolment package.
2. Parent/care givers will complete the online or hardcopy enrolment form and submit it the college: msb.enrolments@cns.catholic.edu.au
3. The College Leadership team will review all applications and consider eligibility in terms of:
 - a. Siblings of existing students and former graduates of the school community.
 - b. Students in Catholic primary schools wishing to transition to Catholic secondary colleges. Preference to students transitioning from Catholic primary schools will be provided in the following order:
 - i. Catholics who participate regularly in the celebration of the Eucharist
 - ii. Catholics
 - iii. Non-Catholics

*Similar consideration will be given to Catholic students transitioning from rural and remote areas not serviced by a Catholic school.

- c. Catholics who participate regularly in the celebration of the Eucharist.
- d. Catholics who commit to the values of the Catholic Church.
- e. Participating members of other faith traditions who commit to the values of the Catholic church.
- f. Students who have parents/carers/grandparents who are alumni of the school.
- g. Those persons not affiliated with any faith tradition, who commit to the values of the Catholic Church.
- h. Availability of spaces in each Year level
- i. Boarding Readiness
- j. Availability of beds for Boarding students, availability of beds in the Bernard and Morrissey boarding Houses.
- k. Equitable numbers will be available to both Day Students and Boarders.

4. If your enrolment application successful, the Enrolment Officer will contact you to arrange an in-person interview time:
 - i. If your interview is successful, you will be either:
 - i. offered a place in the college
 - ii. placed on a waiting list for the next available spot
 - ii. If your interview is unsuccessful, the Enrolment Officer will advise you of the outcomes.
5. If your enrolment application is unsuccessful the Enrolment Officer will advise you of the outcome.

Consideration: Boarding Readiness

MSBC prides itself on providing opportunity to foster learning, build positive relationships and promote inclusivity in the College community. It is essential that future boarding students can demonstrate their readiness to live away from home. To determine Boarding readiness, Leadership consider the following information provided in the enrolment information:

- Attendance – can I show MSBC that I am interested in my learning and attending my current school?
- Attitude – What do I do to achieve my learning goals? How do my actions and choices help me to achieve my goals? How do I treat other people? How do I behave when I'm at school?
- Awareness - What are my likes and dislikes? What are my strengths and what challenges me? What are my ways of viewing the world? How do I respond to other people's opinions
- Achievements – what do I want to achieve by attending boarding school? What type of curricular and extra-curricular activities do I participate in? What social/sport activities am I involved in outside of school?

Consideration: Parent / Care Giver Enrolment Requirements

Education at MSBC is partnership between the parent/care giver, student and the college. It is a requirement that all parents/carers:

- are provided with information about the Mission Statement and its application at the school and are willing to uphold the Mission of the College
- Parents/guardians and students undertake to support school policies, attendance and 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, parent engagement activities, 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
- Parents/guardians will communicate the need for special provisions when facing genuine hardship
- Parents/guardians will communicate learning, wellbeing and medical needs of their student to enable the College to put reasonable adjustments in place as part of the College's inclusive education practice

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 a provision would only be applied in extreme circumstances.

For parents/caregivers of Boarding students, it is a requirement that all parents/carers:

- Maintain communication with the College via phone or email to assist with concerns
- Encourage students to stay at school when things get tough i.e. home sickness
- Visit MSBC, with the option to stay in Transition House when their student is struggling
- Provide positive encouragement to the student and encourage attendance, positive behaviour, completion of academic work and participation in extra-curricular activities

- Take responsibility for vandalism or damage perpetrated by their student
- Work with College staff to resolve issues
- Read the College newsletter and stay update to date with school calendar of events.

Enrolment for Students with Special Needs

MSBC is an inclusive college, and every effort will be to make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities and/or additional learning/wellbeing needs. Reasonable considerations include:

- providing access to classroom materials through assistive technologies such as screen readers
- adapting the physical environment, for example, installing ramps
- modifying the curriculum and assessments, for example allowing a student to answer assessments orally or use a computer
- presenting classroom materials in a different way such as visual, oral or demonstrations
- adapting teaching style, for example breaking lessons and/or activities into smaller sections so they are easier to understand
- reducing the distance between classes/classrooms for students who have physical disabilities
- giving extra time to move from class to class
- allowing more time to complete an exam or assessment or giving the student breaks
- planning excursions in accessible locations, for example making sure the location is wheelchair accessible.

It is not unlawful if an education provider cannot make an adjustment if it would cause unjustifiable hardship on the provider. Examples of unjustifiable hardships might include if there is:

- a very high cost of providing an adjustment
- risk to the safety of others if the adjustment is provided.
- If an education provider claims unjustifiable hardship, they need to prove that the adjustment would cause them unjustifiable hardship. An explanation of why must also be given to the student as early as possible.

Catering for a wide enrolment of abilities, MSBC has a Diversity Department that caters for additional learning needs. As the resources of this unit are finite, assessment of the full needs of any year level in context of the special needs of a student must be given. Notwithstanding this, all students have equal access to the educational opportunities provided by the College.

1. Parents/Caregivers are required to provide documentation of any special educational needs of their child.
2. The Enrolment Officer is required to forward information regarding special education needs to the Middle Leader Diversity.
3. The Middle Leader Diversity is to contact parents to discuss the nature of the disability/additional learning need and arrange a Transition interview.
4. If an action plan is required, the Principal will invite support from Special Education Consultants. Parents are asked to provide further information regarding the student's development, medical and academic history. An interview would take place with parents, Principal or nominee, Special Education Consultant and Learning Support Coordinator.
5. A decision is then made by the Principal as to whether the school can support the students' specific needs.
6. If enrolment is accepted, the parents are involved in the development of a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP). This process involves the Special Education Consultant (CES), Learning Support Coordinator (MSBC) and other staff as required.

Enrolment Timelines

Year 7

Enrolments for a new school year will be processed as follows:

1. Term One – Promotional material sent to schools and communities, and applications open (Transition Officers investigation commence)
2. Term Two – Year 7 interviews for the following school year
 - i. Round 1 Offers Confirmed on May 10
3. Term Three – Round Two Interviews
 - i. Round 2 Offers Confirmed on June 6
4. Term Four – Round Three Interviews
 - i. Round 3 offers made October 30
 - ii. Transition Day

Year 8 – 12

1. Term One – Applications due by Week 3 for a Term 1 commencement, applications after Week 3 will be considered for a Term 2 Commencement
2. Term Two – Applications due by Week 3 for a Term 2 commencement, applications after Week 3 will be considered for a Term 3 Commencement
3. Term Three – Applications due by Week 3 for a Term 3 commencement, applications after Week 3 will be considered for a Term 4 Commencement
4. Term Four – Applications due by Week 3 for a Term 4 commencement, applications after Week 4 will be considered for a Term 1 of the following school year Commencement.

In instances where families relocating from overseas and interstate, exceptions to the above rule may be made.

Enrolment Cancellations

The procedures for each of these circumstances are as follows:

Persistent refusal to pay school fees, despite a demonstrated capacity to pay

Refer to the procedure School Fees – Collection.

These procedures require several attempts to recover the fees and an understanding that the family has the capacity to pay. Consultation with the Parish Priest is also required.

In following the procedures for the collection of overdue fees, Principals will write to parents/guardians asking them to show the cause within 5 working days why the enrolment should not be cancelled, or alternatively to pay outstanding fees in full. The Principal will continue to consult with the Parish Priest.

Enrolment will only be cancelled in the following year to safeguard educational outcomes for the student(s) concerned.

Only the CEDC Executive Director has the authority to cancel enrolment for non-payment of fees, on the recommendation of the Principal, endorsed by the Director School Effectiveness. The Executive Director will consult the Bishop of Cairns. Once approval for cancellation has been given by the Bishop, the decision to cancel enrolment will be final and binding.

A student may be re-enrolled if payment of the outstanding fees is made or satisfactory arrangements are negotiated. It should be noted that the payment of outstanding fees later will not guarantee re-enrolment at schools where there is a student waiting list.

Long unexplained periods of ongoing student absence

This will apply when a student has been absent from a school for longer than 20 (4 weeks) consecutive school days without a known reason, or contact from the student's family or carers, or without any request for a transfer note.

Schools must act consistently with the Directive: Notification Protocol for Unexplained Student Absences, especially in circumstances where there are concerns for the wellbeing of the student. This includes obligations for reporting to a statutory authority. It is expected that schools will make several attempts to contact the family by telephone, email or personal contact.

After the 20 day period, the Principal is entitled to cancel the enrolment and file student protection reports with the Department of Child Safety and the Child Protection Investigation Unit, as required. The student will be removed from the school roll but should remain on the school database and the Executive Director and Professional Standards Unit are to be notified in writing providing full details of absences and copies of records of attempt to contact parent/caregivers

Parent/guardian/carer behaviour

This will apply in situations of ongoing unacceptable behaviour or actions that affect the good order and management of the school, including the emotional and physical wellbeing and safety of employees and other members of the school community. Principals should also be aware of the legal options available to them to exclude persons from the school in the event of unacceptable behaviour (see procedure: Visitor/Intruder Misconduct – Legislated Powers of a Principal).

Those involved in unacceptable behaviour and actions are to be made aware of their commitments as a condition of enrolment (Enrolment form) and the expectations of the Parent Code of Conduct. There should be direct engagement by school leadership and relevant staff towards corrective outcomes and the use of mediation, possibly through independent facilitation, if helpful and appropriate. The Parish Priest will be consulted and may become involved in engagement and mediation.

The responsible Director School Effectiveness should be kept informed and is available to assist as required.

In the event of the failure of these interventions the matter will be directed in writing, outlining the dates, steps and actions undertaken to the Executive Director who will then at the Executive Director's discretion ask the parent/carer/guardian involved to show cause why the enrolment should not be cancelled. The person(s) involved should be given 5 working days to respond in writing.

If a satisfactory outcome cannot be negotiated, the Principal will seek determination of a cancellation of enrolment through the Director School Effectiveness by the CEDC Executive Director.

Only the CEDC Executive Director has the authority to cancel enrolment, on the recommendation of the Principal, endorsed by the Director of School Effectiveness. The Executive Director will consult the Bishop of Cairns. Once approval for cancellation has been given by the Bishop, the decision to cancel enrolment will be final and binding.

Principals should ensure full file documentation is maintained through the process.

Principals should also be aware of the provisions of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 in which a Principal has legislated powers to control inappropriate or illegal conduct. (See Procedure: Visitor/Intruder Misconduct – Legislated Powers of a Principal).

Reflection

'An education in the Mercy tradition invites us to take up a challenge - one that encourages us to develop fully our own God given talents. At the same time, it enkindles within us a desire to assist others, so that they to 'may have life and have it to the full' (John 10:10).

Enrolment Enquiries

Enrolment Officer:

Phone: 40961444

Email: msb.enrolments@cns.catholic.edu.au

Related Directives, Policies and Procedures

Policies:

- Inclusive Practices
- Enrolling students with special needs
- Enrolment of students substantially below or above year level expectations
- Enrolment Application Support Procedure for Students Requiring Significant Educational Adjustments

Procedures:

- Cancellation of student enrolment
- Application for Enrolment

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