

# St Thomas the Apostle School Enrolment Procedure

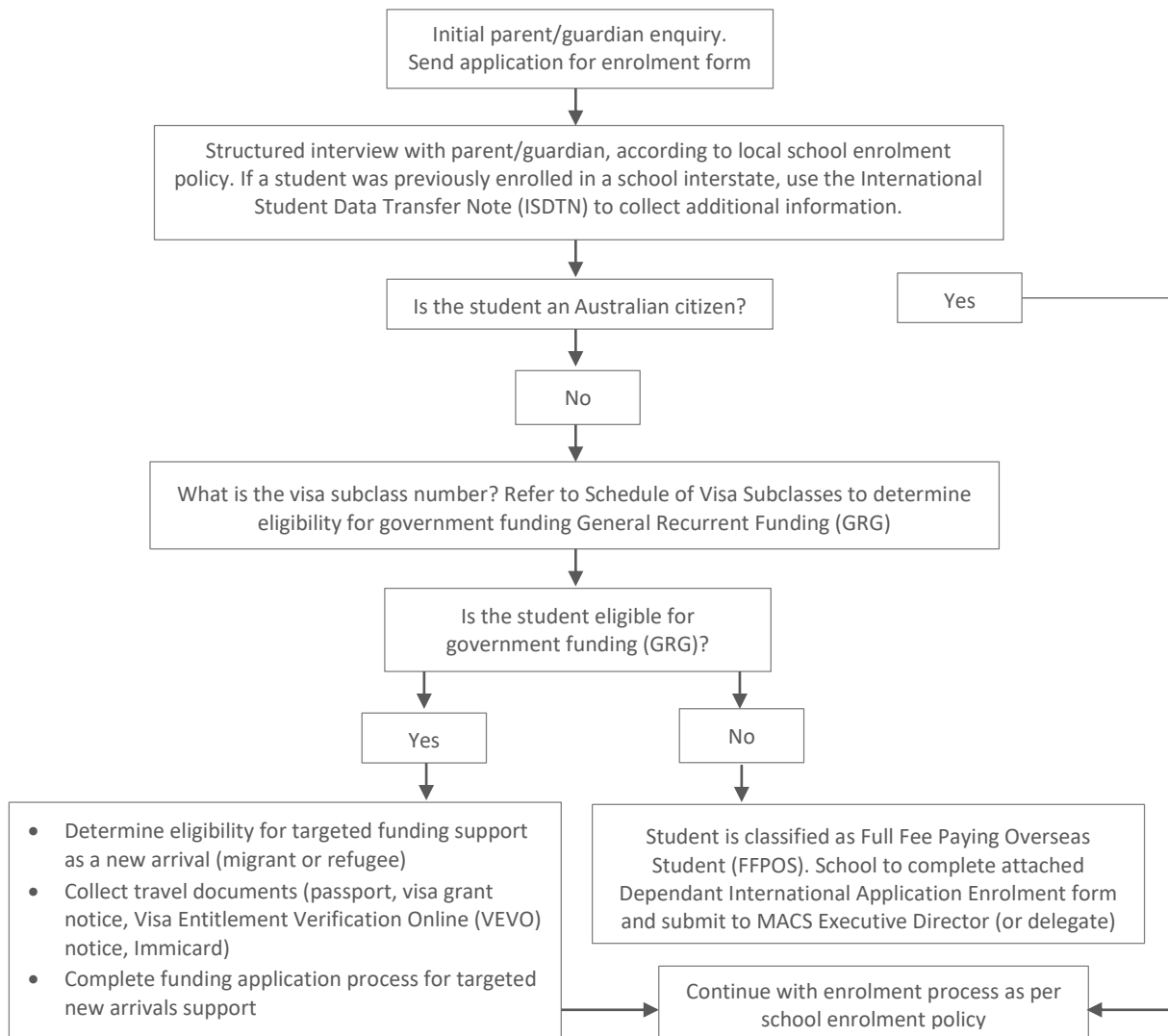


St Thomas the Apostle School is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS), where formation and education are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine, and where the teachers are outstanding in true doctrine and uprightness of life.

Parents seeking to enrol their child in St Thomas the Apostle School should review our Enrolment Policies and Procedures to understand the enrolment procedure and their obligations if the application to enrol their child is successful. A reference to Parent in this document includes a reference to a parent or guardian (as applicable).

## Mandated Enrolment Procedure

To ensure consistency and transparency, we are required to follow the enrolment procedure presented in the following flow chart.



## Children under the minimum school entry age and pre-Prep programs

### *Exemption for enrolment under minimum school entry age*

Under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, schooling is compulsory for students aged between 6 and 17 years unless an exemption from attendance has been granted. Victorian children are eligible to commence school if they are **5 years of age on 30 April** in the year they start school. If a parent/guardian is seeking to enrol their child in a school at a younger age, a minimum age exemption is required. Exemptions are the exception rather than the norm and will only be granted when commencement of formal education is deemed to be in the child's best interests. Enrolment can only proceed with written approval by the MACS Executive Director (or the delegate of the MACS Executive Director) subject to the following Minimum Age Exemption Application Criteria:

#### **Minimum Age Exemption Application Criteria**

1. Suitable academic ability as evidenced by cognitive assessment documenting a  $\geq 130$  Full Scale IQ (2 standard deviations or more above the mean).
2. Evidence of enrolment in formal schooling and attendance for more than one term at an interstate or overseas school (not pre-school), and transfer documentation including evidence of appropriate academic achievement.
3. The student will be aged at least 4 years 6 months on or before 30 April in the year they commence school as evidenced by a birth certificate or passport (in addition to meeting criteria 1 or 2).
4. Evidence from childcare, kindergarten, allied health or other relevant professionals that support early age entry and the detrimental impacts to the longer term interests of the child were they not to attend school.

To apply for a minimum age exemption application:

1. The parent/guardian should contact the Principal to seek advice about the minimum age exemption procedure. Note additional support (e.g. an interpreter) can be provided upon request.
2. The Principal will determine if there is sufficient evidence to meet the aforementioned Minimum Age Exemption Application Criteria.
3. The Principal will submit an application to the MACS Executive Director for approval by the Executive Director or a delegate. The application should include:
  - minimum Age Exemption Application form
  - supporting letter from the parent(s)/guardian(s) requesting an exemption for enrolment under minimum school entry age
  - supporting documentation from appropriate health or educational professionals detailing cognitive assessment results (IQ at or above 130) and substantive reasons for early school entry
  - if relevant, evidence of enrolment in formal schooling and attendance for more than one term at an interstate or overseas school (not pre-school), and transfer documentation including evidence of appropriate academic achievement (e.g. school report).

### *Pre-Foundation programs*

These Procedures do not support the promotion of pre-Prep/Foundation programs which provide two years of schooling at the Foundation level. Indeed, repetition of a school year at any level has not been proven to create the opportune conditions for future learning development, is often detrimental to future progress and not recommended. A child's perceived lack of 'readiness' for school in the Foundation year may be caused by developmental needs, which would be better identified and addressed through flexible arrangements that cater for the needs of every child from the point of school entry, i.e. the Foundation year.

### ***Year 7 enrolment***

In enrolling students at Year 7, secondary schools that share priority parishes are required to collaborate to ensure all applicants are offered a place at a secondary MACS school. Collaboration aims to be open and transparent and consistent with local school enrolment policies and practices. Secondary schools must comply with the upper limit ceiling for Year 7 enrolments for each MACS school, and take into account the priority parishes for each school together with the agreed timeline for the Year 7 enrolment procedure.

### ***Enrolment of students with additional learning needs***

We welcome parents who wish to enrol a child with additional learning needs and explore available options to fully understand and accommodate the child's needs. The procedure for enrolling students with additional learning needs should be the same as that for enrolling any student. There is collaboration between primary and secondary MACS schools to ensure coordination and consistency of policy and procedures. We are required to comply with the relevant Australian and Victorian government legislation when considering the enrolment of a child with additional learning needs.

### ***Enrolment of students from interstate***

When enrolling students whose previous school was interstate, we use 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 procedure, and be sensitive to parent/student consent requirements for the provision of information. All relevant documents and information are available at the Education Council's website [www.educationcouncil.edu.au/EC-Reports-and-Publications/EC-ISDTN/EC-ISDTN--](http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/EC-Reports-and-Publications/EC-ISDTN/EC-ISDTN--)

### ***Dependent Full-Fee Paying Overseas Students***

Parents who are studying, or planning to study, in Victoria and wish to enrol their child as a full-fee paying overseas student (FFPOS) are to refer to the Dependent Full-Fee Paying Overseas Students (FFPOS) Application which explains the application procedure and requirements and the relevant visa classes that apply.

## **Relevant legislation to be considered when enrolling students in MACS schools**

### ***Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.)***

The regulations require a registered school to have a clearly defined enrolment policy that complies with all applicable state and Commonwealth laws. The Principal must be familiar with the relevant provisions of this legislation and Enrolment Policy and, as appropriate, ensure application of this Enrolment Policy.

### ***Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)***

This legislation prohibits discrimination by an educational authority against a person in deciding who should be admitted as a student, in the terms on which the authority admits a person as a student, or by refusing or failing to accept the person's application for admission as a student. However, an exception is provided for an educational authority that operates an educational institution wholly or mainly for students of a particular sex, religious belief, age or age group, such that it may exclude from that institution people who are not of the particular sex, religious belief, age or age group. All other discrimination in enrolment of students is prohibited.

### ***Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)***

Under this legislation, discrimination based on disability is unlawful. It applies to school authorities and their employees. The definition of disability is broad and includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, and neurological or learning disability, as well as physical disfigurement and the presence in the body of a disease-causing organism.

Relevant for enrolments, it is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person's disability, or a disability of any of the person's associates, by refusing or

failing to accept the person's application for admission as a student, or in the terms and conditions on which it is prepared to admit the person as a student.

However, it is not unlawful to refuse or fail to accept a person's application for admission as a student in an educational institution where the person, if admitted as a student by the educational authority, would require services or facilities that are not required by students who do not have a disability and the provision of which would impose unjustifiable hardship on the educational authority.

### ***Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)***

This legislation governs how schools must handle personal information collected as part of the enrolment procedure.

Our governing body has adopted a Privacy Policy in respect of its schools with which we must comply. We ensure the Privacy Policy is kept up-to-date on the school's website and in applicable forms and school documentation.