



Admissions, Enrolment and Withdrawal Policy

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1. Purpose

To provide the policy for admission to the Castlemaine Steiner School & Kindergarten (CSSK) and Playgroup program.

1.1 Equity

Castlemaine Steiner School & Kindergarten accepts applications for admission from all families and children, subject to Australian Citizenship, Permanent Residency and Visa legislation. CSSK does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexuality, physical or mental disability, religion or socioeconomic status. Enrolment processes shall be open, fair and transparent.

1.2 Relevant Legislation or Authority

The Victorian Department of Education and Training requires funded organisations to meet the VRQA Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration, including that:

A school must have a clear enrolment policy that complies with all applicable State and Commonwealth laws including those relating to discrimination and the duty to make reasonable adjustments, equal opportunity, privacy, immunisation and the Australian Consumer Law.

The Australian Education Act and the Australian Education Regulations 2013 set out schools' funding accountability, and set out the use of funds and accountability requirements.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 require approved services to have policy and procedures in place in relation to enrolment and orientation (Regulation 168(2)(k)).

Early childhood education and care services which are regulated under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 have legislative responsibilities under the Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Act 2015 to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with acceptable immunisation documentation (refer to Definitions).

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Australian Education Act 2013 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (VIC)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (VIC)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care National Regulations 2011
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Regulations 2015 (Vic)
- Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth)
- Schools Assistance - Learning Together – Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity Act 2004 (Commonwealth).

1.3 Non- denominational

Steiner schools are non-denominational.

1.4 The school's expectations

When a student is enrolled, the student's parents/guardians are bound by the policies and procedures of CSSK.

2. Authority

The Principal is responsible for the development, compliance, monitoring and review of this policy and any associated guidelines.

Implementation

The Enrolment Officer is responsible for the implementation of this policy. This position is overseen by the Business Manager & Principal.

3. Enrolment Age

The school complies with the relevant regulatory bodies in relation to start ages for children in our Kindergarten and Prep programs. Children are enrolled according to their age as at 31st of December of each year. Ages of participation are as follows;

Group/Class	Age
Playgroup	Birth to 4 years (inclusive)
Kindergarten	In the year they turn 5 years
Prep	In the year they turn 6 years

Variations to this occur when children may benefit from a 2nd year of Kindergarten. In this scenario, the school will assist with an assessment of developmental delays and make any necessary notifications to the Department of Education.

4. Class & Group sizes

Variations to the below may be approved by the Board, on recommendation from the Principal. A Class teacher may apply to the Principal to cap enrolments to their class, at either lower or higher numbers, for reasons such as;

- additional needs in the class
- to allow the class to consolidate

Group/Class	Size
Playgroup sessions	12
Kindergarten	18
Prep	22
Class 1 -8	25

5. Children with additional needs and support requirements

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and Disability Standards for Education 2005, it is the responsibility of an education system to give the same opportunities and choices on enrolment of a child with a disability as those offered to other prospective children without disabilities.

The School will work within the parameters of the;

- Relevant state and federal Equal Opportunity legislation
- Relevant disability discrimination legislation
- Disability Standards for Education (2005)
- School policy for Children with Special Needs

If it becomes apparent during pre-offer enrolment interview(s) that the child has special education needs and will require educational support, the school will arrange additional interviews with specialist educational support staff, parents, teachers and the Principal. Discussions will include appropriate support and reasonable adjustments that can be made by the school.

Parents will be asked to submit relevant school and/or health reports that provide information for staff on how best to meet the child’s needs.

6. Admissions information

With the exception of Playgroup, all applications for enrolment will be offered firstly to those with a current sibling at the school and then via date order of the received Expression of Interest form (EOI) and the non-refundable \$100 Application Fee. Refer to each entry level for further information (see below).

6.1 Sibling Offers

In order to receive an offer of a place at Kinder or Prep, based on a child having a sibling at the school, an Expression of Interest and Registration Fee must be received by the end of Week 3 of Term 1 in the year prior to the proposed entry. Failure to register a student before these times, may result in the student not being offered a position at the Kindergarten or School. Entry at all other levels is dependent on a vacancy being available.

6.2 Admission to Playgroup

Available Playgroup places require the completion of a Playgroup Registration Form, with no Application Fee or Entry Bond payable. Admission to Playgroup is separate to entry to the Kindergarten & School and participation does not provide priority or preference to a place at the school.

6.3 Admission to Kindergarten

Admission to Kindergarten takes place in five stages;

- Completion of an Expression of Interest form (EOI) and payment of a non-refundable Application Fee of \$100.00. This registers a child's name on the waiting list for the required Kindergarten year. This takes place at any time from birth to Kinder age.
- In Term 2 of the year prior to Kinder commencement, first round invitations to attend a Kindergarten interview will be made to those with current siblings at the school who have submitted their Expression of Interest form and paid the \$100 Registration Fee by the due date in 6.1, and then in date order of receipt of the Expression of Interest form and Registration Fee. All relevant enrolment documentation is required prior to the interview with the Principal & Kindergarten Teacher. This provides an opportunity for CSSK to get to know the child and for parents/guardians to learn more about the Kinder program. Any additional educational support needs can also be identified and subsequent interviews/meetings arranged. See section 9.
- Further interviews may be made dependent on available places, during the remainder of the year.
- It is expected that most 'Offers of Place' will be made by the end of Term 2 of the preceding year.
- Acceptance of an 'Offer of Place' is confirmed by the payment of the Entry Bond within 7 days. In the case of first round offers, the place will be forfeited if this has not occurred two months after the offer date unless a payment plan is in place. Where offers are made later in the year, the Entry Bond must be paid prior to the child's commencement at school. All parents must also attend a meeting with the School's Business Manager.

6.4 Admission to Prep

All CSSK Kindergarten students receive a guaranteed Prep place; leaving an additional four places available each year.

New admissions to prep takes place in five stages;

- Completion of an Expression of Interest form (EOI) and payment of a non-refundable Application Fee of \$100.00 to register a child's name on the waiting list for the required Prep year. This takes place at any time from birth to school age.

- In Term 3, of the preceding year, first round interviews occur with children with current siblings at the school who have submitted their Expression of Interest form and paid the \$100 Registration Fee by the due date in 6.1, and then in date order of receipt of the EOI and Registration Fee. Attended by the Principal & Prep Teacher, this provides more opportunity for CSSK to get to know the child and for parents/guardians to learn more about the Steiner program. Subsequent interviews/meetings will be held where additional educational support needs are identified. See section 9.
- Further interviews may be made, dependent on available places, during the remainder of the year.
- An Offer of Place will be made by the end of Term 3.
- Acceptance of an Offer of Place is confirmed by the receipt of a fully completed Enrolment Application, all relevant documentation and the payment of the Entry Bond within 7 days. A meeting with the School’s Business Manager will also be required prior to commencement.

6.5 New Admission to Classes 1 – 8

New admission to Classes 1-8 takes place in four stages;

- Completion of an Expression of Interest form (EOI) and payment of a non-refundable Application Fee of \$100.00.
- If a vacancy exists for proposed entry at Terms 1, 2 or 3, interviews with both the Principal and Class Teacher will be held. Subsequent interviews/meetings will be held where additional educational support needs are identified.
- Proposed entry for the commencement of Term 4, will not proceed until waitlist enrolments for the following year have been contacted and offered earlier entry. This is to ensure they are not disadvantaged. If these offers are not accepted, an interview will be arranged.
- Acceptance of an Offer of Place is confirmed by the receipt of a fully completed Enrolment Application, all relevant documentation and the payment of the Entry Bond within 7 days. A meeting with the School’s Business Manager will also be required prior to commencement.

6.6 Overview to Enquiry, Registration, Enrolment & Commencement Process (excluding Kinder).



7. Legislative requirements for Kindergarten Admissions

All admissions to the CSSK Kindergarten program must comply with the Department of Health & Human Services “No jab, no play” legislation. At all times during the admissions and enrolment process, valid immunisation status certificates must be available and compliant with this legislation. If at a later date a child’s immunisation status does not comply, the school will retract the Offer and the Application Fee & Entry Bond is forfeited.

For further information refer to; <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play>

8. Enrolment

8.1 Enrolment Consent

Enrolment to the school ordinarily requires the written consent of both legal representative guardians of the student. This ensures and protects the rights of both parents. Where both signatures are not available, a Statutory Declaration stating the circumstances of the non-signing parent or a copy of a current supporting court order must be provided to accompany the enrolment paperwork, as applicable. Refer to Attachment 1.

8.2 Enrolment paperwork

Enrolment is not complete until all Enrolment paperwork is received by the Enrolments Officer. This may include, but is not limited to, Enrolment Forms, Birth Certificate, Immunisation Status Certificate, copies of Medical Management Plans, Court Orders, Conveyance Allowance & CSEF forms. Students are not permitted to commence at the school or enter the classroom until the enrolment process is complete, including receipt and acceptance of all paperwork. Refer to the current Enrolment form for a full list of requirements.

8.3 Acceptance of Place

Acceptance of an Offer of Place is confirmed by the receipt of a fully completed Enrolment Application, all relevant documentation and the payment of the Entry Bond. The child is unable to commence until this has all been fully completed.

8.4 Commencement dates

8.4.1 During school term for immediate start students

An “Offer of place” is made on the basis of all relevant interviews taking place with the Principal and Teacher and that the start date will be within the current term.

8.4.2 For the following term or year

An “Offer of place” is made on the basis of all relevant interviews taking place with the Principal and Teacher and that the start date for the student will be at the commencement of the following term or Term 1 of the following year.

8.5 Tuition Fees

The initial term’s tuition fees payable are calculated on a pro rata basis for the weeks the student will attend. Additional charges apply for music tuition, camps and excursions. Refer to the School Fees Information for the current year.

9. Waitlists

Waitlists occur when the number of applications exceeds the number of available places. Prospective families are advised at the time of payment of the Application Fee if there is a Waitlist

for their required year level. Registration for a waitlist at Kindergarten, Prep or any other school level requires the completion of the Expression of Interest form and payment of the non-refundable Application Fee of \$100. When positions become available they will be offered to children with current siblings at the school (subject to section 6.1) and then in Expression of Interest form and fee receipt date order.

9.1 Removal from waitlist

Removal from a waitlist occurs when an “Offer of Place” is made, but not accepted by the family or when availability of a place is communicated to the family in writing and a response is not received within 7 days. In these scenarios, the Offer of Place and Application Fee is forfeited.

9.2 Changing the waitlisted year

On occasion, a family may opt to change the year required for entry to the school. For example, a Kindergarten place may no longer be required, but a Prep place is still desired. Families can provide advice of this change in writing and the original date of their EOI and Application Fee payment date is retained on the new enrolment list.

10. Financial information

10.1 Application Fees

All Applications to attend the School are subject to the payment of a non-refundable Application Fee of \$100. This payment covers the administrative costs associated with processing an enrolment application. Payment of the \$100 non-refundable Application Fee does not guarantee placement at the school.

10.2 Entry Bond

When an Offer of Place is made, families confirm acceptance of the place via the payment of an Entry Bond within 7 days. In the event that the child does not commence at CSSK, Entry Bonds are forfeited.

The Entry Bond is refundable when the child finishes school at the end of Year 8, or with one full term’s written notice of withdrawal. If there are any outstanding fees, the Entry Bond will be credited to the account before any credit balance is refunded.

For re-enrolling students a new Entry Bond is required, even if the previous Bond was forfeited.

10.3 Tuition Fees

The school charges tuition fees and other charges and levies, which are published in advance by the school on the school’s website. The Fee Retrieval Policy sets out the policy and states the School’s position on the collection of school fees, and sets out the process for fee retrieval.

When a student commences part way into a term, tuition fees payable are calculated on a pro-rata basis for the weeks the student will attend. In addition to this, there are charges for music tuition, camps and excursions which are dependent on the class level. Refer to the School Fees Information for the current year.

10.4 Financial Commitment / Jointly and severally liable

As part of the enrolment process, families meet with the school’s Business Manager to review all financial information associated with the enrolment and school attendance.

Both signatories to the enrolment form are jointly and severally liable for ongoing fee payments, irrespective of private maintenance and financial support arrangements. This ensures and protects the rights of both parents.

10.5 Outstanding Debts

New enrolments are not confirmed for siblings whose families have an outstanding debt to the school and who are not on an approved payment plan. For example, Kindergarten places cannot be offered to siblings when the family has an outstanding debt and no current payment plan in place.

10.6 Previous Debtors to the School

If a family has left the school with an outstanding debt, and subsequently seeks to re-enrol a child or children, a place will not be offered until the outstanding debt has been paid. The exception to this may be cases of extreme financial hardship, where at the discretion of the Principal a written fee agreement may be arranged with the Business Manager.

11. Withdrawing students

For all Withdrawals, a full term's notice, in writing signed by both legal parents/guardians of the student is required by the end of the first week of the term. This is not required if a Statutory Declaration or a supporting Court Order is provided. If the required notice is not received then the Entry Bond will not be refunded. For all withdrawals:

- i. If leaving during the first week of term, the term's fees will be reversed from the debtors account.
- ii. If leaving after the first week of the term, payment of the current term's fees remain payable in full.
- iii. When the debtor has an outstanding balance the entry bond refund will be applied firstly to the debtor's account, after which any credit balances will be refunded to the debtor.

All families intending to withdraw a student are offered a confidential exit interview with the Principal (or delegated representatives).

12. Dispute resolution

Contentious or disputed matters are referred to the Principal who maintains responsibility to ensure that the policy has been followed.

13. Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Term	Definition
Acceptable immunisation documentation	As defined by the <i>Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services</i> as acceptable evidence that a child is fully vaccinated for their age, or is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind their vaccinations; or has a medical reason not to be vaccinated; or has been assessed as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.
Application Fee	A payment to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application for a place in a program at the service.
CSSK	Castlemaine Steiner School & Kindergarten
Current Sibling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brother or sister of the child (with at least one biological parent in common or legally adopted) irrespective of their place of residence;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A stepbrother or sister of the child (where the spouse or de facto partner of the child’s parent is not the child’s parent), whose usual place of residence is the same as that of the child; or • A child officially in care or foster care and living at the same place of residence with another child attending the school
Disability	<p>A condition which:</p> <p>is attributable to an intellectual, psychological/psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments;</p> <p>is permanent or likely to be permanent;</p> <p>may or may not be of a chronic or episodic nature; and</p> <p>results in: a substantially reduced capacity of a person for communication, social interaction, learning mobility; and the need for continuing support services</p>
Enrolled	<p>Kindergarten is the main entry point for children commencing at the Castlemaine Steiner School & Kindergarten. When all enrolment requirements have been met, children attending this service are automatically “enrolled” for Prep and continuing years, contingent upon signed agreement by both parents/guardians, or in the absence of both parents, a signed Statutory Declaration.</p>
Enrolment Form	<p>Background and medical information for the child. The form is placed on the child’s enrolment record and is kept confidential by the service. It is a legal contract confirming the enrolment and parental/legal representative responsibilities.</p>
Enrolment Record	<p>The collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (Regulations 160, 161, 162) including the enrolment form; details of any court orders; and immunisation documentation as specified in the <i>Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services</i>. This information is kept confidential by the school.</p>
Fee	<p>A charge for either tuition, application for enrolment, entry bonds.</p>
Legal representative guardian	<p>(In relation to this policy) is a person who has lawful authority of the child as described on the Birth Certificate or as per Court Orders that alter this authority.</p>
Waitlist	<p>Where demand for a particular class exceeds available places a list of prospective families wishing for a place is created.</p>

14. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, CSSK will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service’s policy review cycle, or as required

15. Document review and version control

Version	Date	Author	Nature of Amendment	Ratified by the Board of Directors on:
1.0	2009 - 2011	Deborah Wardle	Initial review from aged policy to clarify waiting list procedures and students with disabilities.	2011 Date to be confirmed.
2.0	July 2013	Amanda Colebrook	Review to clarify administration procedures.	Operated under School Governing Policy. Not ratified by BoD.
3.0	August 2016	Jane Staley	Review currency to meet the VRQA registration requirements.	By electronic resolution 1/9/2016
4.0	January 2018	Rachael Pearce	To update requirement for 2 signatures for enrolments.	Resolution # 2018-01-005 21/2/2018
5.0	June 2019	Helen Greenwood	To remove procedural information, update information, amend preferences information for offer of places	Resolution 2019-05-R09 20/06/2019

16. Approval

Principal Name:	Chairperson of the Board of Directors Name:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

Attachment 1 - Sample copy of Statutory Declaration required for all single signatory enrolments.

State of Victoria

Statutory Declaration

I, _____
(full name)

Of, _____
(full residential address)

(occupation)

do solemnly and sincerely declare that:-

In relation to my child _____ (insert Child's name)

- The second parent/legal guardian is unable to sign their consent to enrol my child at the Castlemaine Steiner School & Kindergarten due to (Please provide a paragraph statement outlining why the second signature cannot be obtained, i.e. deceased, overseas)

- I declare that there are no court proceedings currently in practice that would alter my authority to make "long term" decisions in relation to my child.
- In the event of an objection to this enrolment being received by the school, the school will assess on an individual basis the child's continuation at the school and they may be de-enrolled.
- In the event of a false declaration the school may consider de-enrolling the student.

I acknowledge that this declaration is true and correct, and I make it with the understanding and belief that a person who makes a false declaration is liable to the penalties of perjury.

Declared at _____

This _____ day of _____ 20 _____

(Signature of person making this declaration)

Before me,

.....
Signature of Authorised Witness

The authorised witness must print or stamp his or her name, address and title under section 107A of the *Evidence (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1958* (as of 1 January 2010), (previously *Evidence Act 1958*), (eg. Justice of the Peace, Pharmacist, Police Officer, Court Registrar, Bank Manager, Medical Practitioner, Dentist)