

# Enrolment Policy

This policy has been developed to ensure Walcha Central school community is aware of entitlements, requirements and procedures when enrolling students.

## Enrolment Ceilings

The school will establish an enrolment ceiling, based on available permanent accommodation. This ceiling is approximately 200 students in K-6 and 300 students in Years 7-12.

## Enrolment Buffer

No additional accommodation (permanent or demountable) 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 on the number of families moving into or out of the area. Places in the buffer are not to be offered to non-local students. In schools 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.

## Placement Panels

In schools where demand for non-local places exceeds availability, the school will establish a placement panel to consider and make recommendations on all non-local enrolment applications. The composition of the panel will include at least one staff member, other than the principal, and the president of the P&C. The panel will be chaired by the principal who will have a casting vote. While there may be consultation with the school P&C or other school community representative structures, the development of criteria for the enrolment of non-local students will be the responsibility of the placement panel. The criteria will be consistent with the general principles governing enrolment stated above. 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 decisions made by the placement panel must be made within the context of the agreed enrolment ceiling and the buffer retained for local students arriving later in the year. The placement panel should record all decisions and minutes of meetings are to be available on request by the Director of Public Schools (Northern Tablelands).

## Criteria for Non-local Enrolment Applications

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 could include factors such as (criteria are not listed in a priority order):

- \* proximity and access to the school
- \* siblings already enrolled at the school
- \* access to single-sex education
- \* medical reasons
- \* safety and supervision of the student before and after school
- \* availability of subjects or combinations of subjects
- \* special interests and abilities
- \* compassionate circumstances
- \* structure and organisation of the school.

The principal will ensure that the established criteria are applied equitably to all applicants. Parents should be provided with an explanation of the decisions of the placement panel in writing, should they request it.

## **Waiting Lists**

Waiting lists may be established for non-local students. Parents should 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 should reflect realistic expectations of potential vacancies. Waiting lists are current for one year.

## **Appeals**

Where a parent wishes to appeal against the decision of the placement panel, the appeal should be made in writing to the principal. Where required, the principal should provide or arrange assistance, such as an interpreter, to enable the appeal to be set out in writing. The principal will seek to resolve the matter. If the matter is not resolved at the local level the Director of Public Schools (Northern Tablelands) will consider the appeal and make a determination. The Director of Public Schools (Northern Tablelands) will consult with the relevant principals and school communities as necessary. The purpose of the appeal is to determine whether the stated criteria have been applied fairly.

## **Responsibilities of the Principal**

With regard to enrolment, the school principal is responsible for:

- \* preparing an enrolment policy in consultation with the school council
- \* informing present and prospective members of the school community about provision available at the school
- \* managing the school enrolments within the resources provided to the school
- \* advising the Director of Public Schools (Northern Tablelands) of enrolment and curriculum trends in the school
- \* maintaining accurate and complete enrolment data
- \* establishing an enrolment ceiling to cater for anticipated local demand
- \* setting an enrolment number (a buffer) to cater for anticipated local demand during the year
- \* establishing a placement panel when demand for non-local places exceeds available accommodation
- \* documenting and promulgating the criteria for selection amongst non-local enrolment applications to parents and the school community
- \* making decisions on non-local enrolments at the school level wherever possible.

## **Responsibilities of the Director of Public Schools (Northern Tablelands)**

With regard to enrolment, the Director of Public Schools is responsible for:

- \* monitoring enrolment policies, procedures, numbers and ceilings at all schools in the district
- \* making determinations for out of area placements which cannot be resolved at the school level
- \* monitoring schools' local areas in collaboration with principals, directors of adjacent districts (where appropriate) and the Asset Management unit.

## **Transition to Secondary School**

### **Local High School Placement**

Most secondary schools (including Central Schools) have a designated local enrolment area. Students residing within that area are entitled to be enrolled at the government high or central school that is designated for that intake area. Students from government primary and central schools will usually enrol in high or central schools following the *Procedures for Secondary School Enrolment - Transition from Year 6 to Year 7* commencing with a request to complete an *Expression of Interest* form provided by the primary school who will then forward this to the

nominated local high and central schools. Principals will assist parents in determining whether a student resides in the designated local enrolment area. Students in Year 6 at Walcha Central School still need to complete the Expression of Interest form to commence the process even though they are continuing students.

### **Non-local High School Placement**

Parents are entitled to apply for enrolment of their children in up to four non-local high or central schools. Students from government primary schools will usually enrol in high or central schools following the *Procedures for Secondary School Enrolment -Transition from Year 6 to Year 7* commencing with a request to complete an *Expression of Interest* form provided by the primary school who will then forward this to the nominated high and central schools. Procedures for other students are set out elsewhere in this document.

### **Enrolment of Students with Special Learning Needs**

#### **Students with Disabilities**

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

Currently at Walcha Central School we make use of targeted funding to provide specialist teachers and support staff, making use of a range of consultancy services to support students enrolled in regular classes.

The decision on where to enrol 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 and the availability of support services at alternative locations. In many situations it will be possible to enrol 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, it is the responsibility of the principal to 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. Further information is available from the school or District office in Armidale.

#### **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.

## **Student Visas**

A program for full fee paying students operates in New South Wales government high schools. International full fee paying students have their enrolment arranged prior to their arrival and therefore are known to the principal. International full fee paying students each receive a letter from the Department of School Education, International Student Programs, authorising enrolment. Enrolments of international full fee paying students must be arranged through the International Student Programs, Communications and Marketing Directorate. At this stage international students studying in New South Wales institutions may enrol their school aged dependants at New South Wales government schools. The child dependant can only be enrolled while a parent is studying in New South Wales and the enrolment must not exceed the period stated on the visa. The student must present with a dependant and student visa.

## **Exchange Students**

Exchange students enrol in NSW high schools for a period of one to twelve months on student visas. Their enrolment is arranged with the principal by the exchange organisation prior to their arrival. Enrolment is at the discretion of the principal.

## **Visitor Visas**

Visitor visas include business visitors, medical treatment visitors and tourists. A student on a visitor visa may be able to enrol for a maximum period of three months which cannot be extended. Students on visitor visas must arrange their enrolment through the Department of School Education'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. Refer to Memorandum to Principals 95.043, *Enrolment in NSW Government Schools of Students from Overseas Countries, 23 May 1995* and the accompanying booklet, *Conditions for Enrolment of Non-Australian Citizens in NSW Government Schools*, available from Communications and Marketing Directorate.

## **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.

### **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 in Years 11 and 12 who choose the HSC Pathway option to accumulate units towards their HSC over several years
- \* students who undertake some of their studies external to the school
- \* students with disabilities involved in post-school options
- \* mature age students re-entering the school system
- \* students with medical conditions enrolling in distance education (medical documentation must be provided).

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

### **Refusal of Enrolment**

Principals may delay 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. This will allow the principal to determine and coordinate the most suitable placement and resourcing for the applicant.

### **Enrolment Data**

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

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

### **Enrolment Forms**

Information should be collected from parents about each student enrolling at the school. 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. The following documents should also be provided to support the enrolment application:

- proof of student identity e.g. birth certificate
- proof of student's residential address
- immunisation records (for students enrolling in a NSW government primary school for the first time)
- copies of medical/healthcare or emergency action plans and doctors letters to verify support for health care procedures
- copies of any family law or other relevant court orders

To assist families and school staff members responsible for enrolment, the Department of Education 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 ERN is the Department of Education'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 ERN 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' entitlements and global funding.

To be read as part of the Department of Education Enrolment of Students Government Schools policy.

For more information:

[www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_admin/enrolment/enrolpol/pd02\\_06\\_enrolment\\_of\\_students.pdf](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_admin/enrolment/enrolpol/pd02_06_enrolment_of_students.pdf)