

Placement

The department's Placement Policy embeds the legal entitlement for students to enrol at their designated neighbourhood school, and to enrol at another school if there is sufficient accommodation.

All Victorian government schools must manage enrolments in accordance with this Placement Policy, except those schools where the Minister or delegate has approved specific entry criteria, being:

- select entry high schools
- specialist schools
- English Language Schools and Centres
- camp and outdoor schools
- hospital schools and teaching units
- distance schools
- flexible learning government schools and flexible learning campuses
- any other school with entry criteria as approved by the Minister or delegate.

The Placement Policy applies to the placement of students at all year levels, from Foundation/Prep to Year 12. Single-sex government schools are required to follow the Placement Policy, noting that only students of the requisite gender are eligible to apply.

Specialist schools are subject to different placement requirements than those described in the Placement Policy. Refer to [Enrolment in specialist schools](#) for more information.

RIGHT TO ATTEND THE DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHOOL

Eligible children and young persons have the right to be admitted to their designated neighbourhood government school, regardless of capacity. Accordingly, all students that reside within the area of a designated neighbourhood school (referred to as a 'school zone') must be offered a place when seeking enrolment.

A student's designated neighbourhood school is generally the school that is nearest the student's permanent address as determined by the school zone. The [Find My School website](#) provides guidance on which school zone a student's permanent residence is located within.

The department recognises that some schools may require additional capacity to accommodate students from within their school zone. In these circumstances, schools may be supported by the temporary allocation of relocatable buildings.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students (such as those holding a dependant or temporary visa) have the legal entitlement to enrol at their designated neighbourhood school.

However, under the Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 (Cth), students who hold a subclass 500 student visa (a student visa in their own name) may only attend accredited government schools. The department refers to students who hold a student visa in their own name as Standard and Study Abroad students.

Given Standard and Study Abroad students are required to attend an accredited school, they may not be able to attend their closest school.

ATTENDING A SCHOOL THAT IS NOT THE STUDENT'S DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHOOL

Students are able to apply for a place at a school that is not their designated neighbourhood school. All students who seek enrolment in a school outside of their designated neighbourhood school should be enrolled in that school if:

- there is sufficient accommodation at the school
- this request for enrolment aligns with the school's enrolment management plan (if they have one).

Where there is insufficient accommodation at a school for all students who seek entry, students must be enrolled according to the Placement Policy's priority order of placement.

SUFFICIENT ACCOMMODATION

Whether a school has sufficient accommodation to enrol additional students depends on a number of factors. These include if the school will continue to have appropriate physical and operational capacity and resources to provide high quality education and services to the school's overall student population. Sufficient accommodation takes into consideration:

- built capacity and/or target-built capacity
- current enrolments and forecast enrolments
- staffing levels
- industrial agreements
- subject/curriculum demands on the school
- where practical, planning for an even distribution of students across all year levels while maintaining class size targets.

Schools must have sufficient accommodation to meet current and future in-zone demand before enrolling students from outside the school zone.

In some instances, schools may not have sufficient accommodation to offer placement to all students. This includes instances where schools are forecast to come under significant enrolment pressure from within the school zone. Where this is the case, the department will work with schools to develop an enrolment management plan to support long term enrolment planning.

The regional director has the authority to determine whether a school has sufficient accommodation and can affect placement of a student.

PRIORITY ORDER OF PLACEMENT

In circumstances when a school may not be able to accept all applications due to existing or future capacity concerns, schools must manage enrolment applications in accordance with the following priority order of placement:

1. students for whom the school is the designated neighbourhood school
2. students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time
3. where the Regional Director has restricted the enrolment, students who reside nearest the school
4. students seeking enrolment on specific curriculum grounds
5. all other students in order of closeness of their home to the school.

In exceptional circumstances, a student may be enrolled in a school based on compassionate grounds. This is an overarching consideration and does not form part of the priority order of placement. Schools are permitted to assess and make a determination for exceptional circumstances applications on a case-by-case basis.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES – COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS

In exceptional circumstances, a student may be enrolled at a school on compassionate grounds. This is an overarching consideration and does not form part of the priority order of placement.

Families must be able to clearly demonstrate the exceptional circumstances which they believe make an enrolment at their designated neighbourhood school unsuitable for their child or children, citing, for example, family violence or specific wellbeing, safety, physical health and/or mental health concerns. Importantly, this is not a comprehensive list of exceptional circumstances whereby a family may seek an enrolment on compassionate grounds; each application will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Exceptional circumstances do not include instances where the designated neighbourhood school is able to make reasonable adjustments for students with disability. Under the Disability Standards for Education 2005, education providers are legally required to make reasonable adjustments for students with disability.

The student will generally be offered a place at the school in next closest proximity to the student's permanent address or current address or location where relevant.

When considering an application or appeal on compassionate grounds, schools and regional staff can request that families provide further evidence. Supporting evidence may include, but is not limited to:

- legal documentation
- reports from allied health and/or medical professionals, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Practitioners, Victoria Police, family violence services or court orders.

Matters of compassionate grounds are of a sensitive nature and may pose risks to health and life (for example, matters related to family violence). Family and student privacy must be maintained when considering applications on compassionate grounds.

STUDENT TESTS AND INTERVIEWS

A placement offer must not be dependent on a satisfactory report, test or interview.

Student tests or interviews may only occur after a placement offer has been accepted. This covers all forms of testing, including examinations for school specific scholarships, academic programs, leadership programs, sporting trials, music or performing arts auditions, and other try-outs or performance assessments. Schools must also not hold formal or informal interviews for prospective students and their families.

Schools must not reserve places or prioritise placement for students on the basis of anticipated test results.

ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT

Schools, in consultation with their regional office, manage enrolments to ensure that all students can attend their local school now and into the future. Strategies that support enrolment management include:

- maintaining accurate and complete enrolment records and data, to facilitate enrolment planning
- planning for an even distribution of students across all year levels while maintaining class size targets
- considering your enrolment projections and ensuring that the starting cohort of enrolment numbers does not increase to the extent that the overall capacity of the school is exceeded for the life of the cohort
- monitoring enrolment trends and subject/curriculum demands in the school
- advising current and prospective parents about any limits on enrolment early.

Schools under enrolment pressure may be supported with an enrolment management plan. Enrolment management plans provide current and projected data and, where required, support schools to implement enrolment restrictions approved by regional directors. Regional offices can recommend and work in partnership with schools to develop enrolment management plans. Schools may also request an enrolment management plan.

Date Implemented	May 2022
Author	
Approved By	School Council
Approval Authority (Signature & Date)	
Date Reviewed	
Responsible for Review	Assistant Principal
Review Date	May 2023
References	