

# Enrolment Policy for Families

## Values

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- The Small School fosters the wellbeing and safety of children and staff.
- Commitment to relationship building within the school community and the community generally is highly valued at The Small School.
- All adults at The Small School model respectful relationships and conflict resolution practices.
- The Small School deeply values procedural fairness as a fundamental right in a democratic society.

## Purpose

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- To provide information to parents and carers who are considering enrolling their child at The Small School.
- To make explicit the criteria on which offers of enrolments are determined with the aim of ensuring a good match between parents/carers, students and the school.
- To conduct enrolments in a manner which complies with all state and Commonwealth laws relating to privacy, immunisation, discrimination and equal opportunity.

## Introduction

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The Small School offers a democratic and family-centred learning environment for primary school aged children. In our first year of operation in 2019, enrolment places will be offered in Years 2,3 and 4. Enrolments will expand to include Kindergarten to Year 6 in 2020 and 2021.

The Small School is registered with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and will be delivering the NSW syllabus. The key learning areas or disciplines in the syllabus are delivered in an integrated and creative way through school-wide themes.

The Small School has a carefully considered educational approach and six guiding principles, which include:

1. Relationships with each other and with the environment are of paramount importance.
2. Learning is theme-based (integrated and emergent curriculum) and real-world focused (experiential).
3. Children thrive when they have some say in how they spend their day and what they learn (Democratic Education).
4. Families are part of the school (family-centred education).
5. We learn cooperatively not competitively (non-competitive environment).
6. Playing is learning too (free play and play-based teaching and learning).

The Small School's guiding principles and broader educational philosophy need to be understood and carefully read by parents and carers so that they can gauge if the school represents a good match for themselves and their child. This is the foremost consideration in the enrolment process. We believe when families appreciate and support these principles that the foundation is created for a good match between a child/family and our school.

## Enrolment Process

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Families are invited to make enquiries about enrolling at the school at any time. If the school has a waiting list this will be posted on the website. Upon making contact, families will be directed to the website where they can download a copy of the prospectus or a hard copy can be mailed to them.

Interested parents are asked to engage with the following enrolment process:

**Read** - Firstly, parents are asked to read the educational philosophy and guiding principles, contained on the school website or in *The Small School Prospectus* thoroughly.

**Visit** - Attend the school either through a school event, held several times throughout the year where parents and children can spend time in the school, have a tour and talk to staff or where no events are scheduled, take a tour of the school with the School Manager. School events include open days, play groups and visits from local preschools. These will be advertised on our website. If no events are scheduled, parents should contact the School Manager to arrange a tour.

**Write** - If, after reading the prospectus and visiting the school, parents would like to proceed with an enrolment they should complete the Enrolment Form, available on the school's website or in hard copy upon request.

**Interview** - Attend an interview with the School Manager.

The purpose of the school interview is to establish whether the school's educational philosophy is consistent with the parent's values and wishes for their child's education. In the interview, the School Manager will discuss in detail the educational philosophy and our six guiding principles. The School Manager will seek response and opinion from the parents or guardian about the philosophy and guiding principles and go through the completed enrolment form with the parents, seeking more information or clarification as required. The interview will also include detailed discussion about the parent's wishes for their child's education and characteristics of their child that they would like the school to know about. Previous academic success or failure is not a factor in our assessment.

Students with disabilities and impairments will be enrolled along with all other eligible children. The *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Standards)* apply to a school's dealings with all students with disabilities and also prospective students with disabilities. These guidelines provide a structure to help schools comply with the *Standards* in the context of the enrolment process for students with a disability as defined under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

When considering an application for enrolment for a student with a disability, a determination should be made regarding the school's capacity to address the student's individual needs. If the school cannot meet the student's needs, the school will work through an individual planning process to identify whether there are reasonable adjustments that could be made to facilitate the student's access to and participation in the educational opportunities provided by the school.

Under the *Standards*, The Small School has three main types of obligations, including:

- **Consultation** with the family (and medical professionals where necessary and with permission) to understand the impact of a student's disability and to determine whether any adjustments or changes are needed to assist the student.
- **Making reasonable adjustments** to the school, drawing upon additional resources to improve accessibility of the school if required.
- **Eliminate discrimination** - Harassment and victimisation of students with disability is unlawful and The Small School must take all reasonable steps to prevent this from happening.

### **Factors Determining the Offering of a Place in Years 2,3 and 4 in 2019**

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- Congruence of the school's philosophies with those of the prospective family (assessed according to the Enrolment Process outlined in this policy).
- Capacity of the school and its staff to meet any specific additional needs of the student
- Siblings enrolled at the school / children of TSS staff.

## Timeline for enrolment 2018 - 2019

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End of October 2018	Expressions of interest should be lodged for enrolment for 2019.
Throughout November	Enrolment forms completed and interviews held with prospective families. Families will be notified of a provisional offer of a place or advised that they are not being offered a place and the reasons why.
First week of December	Families who have received an offer of a place should confirm their acceptance of the place and pay their Enrolment Fee* in order to hold their child's place.
Last week of January 2019	School fees** for Term 1 are due.

\*An Enrolment Fee of \$150 per child or \$250 per family (where more than one child is applying at the same time) is due within 7 days of the offering of a place at TSS. This deposit will appear as a credit on the family's first school fee invoice or will be forfeited if an offered place is not taken.

\*\* See our School Fees Policy for further information.

## Other Enrolment Guidelines

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As an independent school, TSS relies on a combination of government funding and tuition fees paid by parents or carers in order to cover its operating expenses. Our current School Fees Policy does not include discounts for two children enrolled from a single family or for personal financial hardship. However, a discount will be considered for the third child enrolled from a single family.

Every effort will be made by the school administration to assist any accepted enrolled student to maintain their enrolment. It is part of the School Manager's role to facilitate regular communication with parents and carers about any issues which may impact a student's continued enrolment. However, it is possible that a student's enrolment may be cancelled due to the non-payment of school fees; as a result of the implementation of the school's Behavior Management Policy, or with the agreement of the parents. Please see the *School Fees Policy* for more information.

The Enrolment Form must be completed in full including the immunisation status of your child. It is a legal requirement that a parent/guardian declare their child's immunisation status on enrolment and we ask families to do this by providing an immunisation history statement from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register.

The School Manager is responsible for decisions concerning the acceptance or non-acceptance of applications for enrolment. The School Manager must be guided by the decision-making criteria in this policy. Where an enrolment application has been declined by the School Manager, parents/carers have a right to appeal the decision to the School Board. The Small School's review processes are outlined in both the *Raising a Concern or Complaint Policy* and the *Grievance and Conflict Resolution Policy*. These and other policies are available on The Small School website.

Continuing enrolment is subject to the student's and family's adherence to all of The Small School's Policies, but in particular the *Behaviour Management Policy*, *Code of Conduct Policy* and the *Transport Policy*.

### **Related Documentation**

- The Small School Prospectus
- Expression of Interest Form
- Enrolment Form.

### **Related Processes and Policies**

- School Fees Policy
- Raising a Concern or Complaint Policy
- Grievance and Conflict Resolution Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure
- Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure
- Transport Policy and Procedure.