

ENROLMENT POLICY – SPECIALIST PATHWAY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Armstrong Creek School on 03 5218 5100 or armstrong.creek.school@education.vic.gov.au

BACKGROUND

Armstrong Creek School provides a specialist enrolment pathway for students with disability and high needs who have a mild intellectual disability. This policy sets out the eligibility criteria for the specialist enrolment pathway.

In the primary year levels, all students participate in inclusive learning programs and school activities together, regardless of their enrolment pathway. Armstrong Creek School ensures that appropriate supports and accommodations are provided to all students. This is determined on a whole school, year level, class and individual basis, according to identified need and availability of resources.

At the end of Year 6, students who continue to meet the specialist enrolment criteria may attend secondary education at Armstrong Creek School or, if preferred, transition to another secondary school or a specialist school (with the same enrolment criteria).

By law in Victoria all children from the age of 6 up until they turn 17 years must be enrolled at a registered school or registered for home schooling unless they have a reasonable excuse. School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with a comprehensive educational program and access to support networks. It also helps to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and active participation in their local community.

Specialist schools, including Armstrong Creek School via their specialist enrolment pathway have been established to cater for the specific educational needs of students with a disability or with additional needs. Under State and Federal discrimination law, specialist schools and campuses are permitted to set specific enrolment criteria and to not enrol students who do not meet these criteria.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to specify the enrolment criteria for students seeking enrolment at Armstrong Creek School via the specialist enrolment pathway and the evidence required to support applications for enrolment.

It is intended to provide clarity for the local community on the entry criteria and ensure a smooth and supported transition for enrolling students.

SCOPE

Enrolment via the specialist enrolment pathway at Armstrong Creek School is based on a student's disability and associated educational needs. Subject to capacity, student intake may be at any stage of the year, providing the student is of school age and satisfies the eligibility criteria. All applications for enrolment via the specialist enrolment pathway at Armstrong Creek School require regional approval.

ENROLMENT CRITERIA

The following entry eligibility criteria have been specified and approved by the Regional Director, South Western Victoria Region (as the Minister's delegate), in accordance with section 2.2.16(b) of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic).

The enrolment criteria have been determined based on the identified education needs of students in the community. A student's enrolment will be reviewed periodically in line with their needs.

Students Seeking to Enrol Must Have:

A diagnosis for Intellectual Disability from a registered psychologist.

1. Sub-average general intellectual functioning which is demonstrated by a full-scale score of two standard deviations or more below the mean score on a standardised individual test of general intelligence; for example a full scale score of between 50 and 70 on one of the recommended standardised individual tests of intelligence, and
2. Significant deficits in adaptive behaviour established by a composite score of two standard deviations or more below the mean on an approved standardised test of adaptive behaviour; for example a Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales composite score of 70 or below, and
3. A history and evidence of an ongoing problem with an expectation of continuation during the school years.

Applications from students who do not satisfy the above criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the region, in consultation with the Principal, in consideration of the student's education and support needs. The Regional Director, South Western Victoria Region, or delegate must approve enrolments for students who do not meet the eligibility criteria.

PRIORITY ORDER OF PLACEMENT

In circumstances where the school may not have sufficient accommodation to be able to accept all applications from eligible students, the school will manage enrolment applications in accordance with the following priority order of placement:

1. Students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time.
2. Students who reside nearest to the school.

The school must ensure that all applicants eligible under the first criterion have been offered a place before moving to consideration of the second criterion.

VERIFICATION OF PERMANENT ADDRESS

When assessing enrolment applications under the priority order of placement, Armstrong Creek School may ask for supporting documentation to assist them in verifying a student's permanent residence.

Armstrong Creek School may request original or certified copies of rental agreements, unconditional contracts of sale or other official documentation that demonstrates permanent residence.

Documents should show the same address and parent's/carer's name as recorded on the school enrolment application form. The school may also make the following enquiries to verify the information provided:

- a) Checking the electoral roll at an Australian Electoral Commission office or the Victorian Electoral Commission head office.
- b) Checking with a real estate agent to confirm a rental address.
- c) For a rental property which is a studio apartment or a one-bedroom unit, checking whether there are any regulations/codes limiting the occupancy of these apartments to one person per apartment.

The enrolment application may be unsuccessful if, after reasonable enquiries, the Principal is unable to verify that the evidence provided is genuine and valid. Applicants may then seek to appeal the decision according to the Appeal process outlined below.

ENROLMENT ON COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS

In exceptional circumstances, a student who meets the enrolment criteria for the specialist enrolment pathway at Armstrong Creek School may be approved by the Regional Director South Western Victoria Region outside of the priority order of placement, based on compassionate grounds. 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. The grounds for these exceptional circumstances do not include concerns related to a student's disability where those concerns can be addressed by making reasonable adjustments.

This is an overarching consideration and does not form part of the priority order of placement. Further advice and support when considering applications on compassionate grounds is available on the [Policy and Advisory Library](#) and from regional staff.

EVIDENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

To support a student's application for enrolment, the following evidence and supporting information is required:

- a) a signed psychologist's report from within the last 24 months reporting the results of an IQ test, and
- b) an assessment of adaptive behaviour.

The Department provides assessment services to support specialist schools in determining whether the student meets their enrolment criteria. Department regional offices also play a role in supporting specialist schools with enrolment processes.

NOTE: Enrolment applications may not be successful if the requested documentation is not provided.

APPEAL PROCESS

Parents/carers can appeal against the decision not to approve an enrolment. This can occur in relation to enrolments at any age level. Parents or carers seeking to appeal a specialist school's enrolment decision should lodge a written appeal with the school. The Department will contact parents/carers with further information after an appeal is lodged.

COMMUNICATION

The enrolment policy for Armstrong Creek School's specialist enrolment pathway will be made available to the school community on the school's website.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	30 March 2023
Approved by	Principal and Regional Director, South Western Victoria Region
Next scheduled review date	30 March 2026