



# St Francis Primary School Nathalia

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*St Francis will provide a child safe environment where all children have the right to be treated with respect and will be protected from harm.*



## ENROLMENT POLICY

### **Commitment to Child Safety**

All students enrolled, and any child visiting, have a right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety.

St Francis is a Child Safe school. Parents and Carers are required to read our Child Safe Policies and Procedures, available on our school website <http://www.sfnathalia.catholic.edu.au/> as part of your acceptance of enrolment. These policies and procedures **must** be adhered to.

### **St Francis' commitment to a safe environment for children:**

St Francis Primary School is committed to the creation of a safe, just and respectful environment that supports wellness for all members of the school community. In this, there is a moral obligation and shared responsibility to protect the most vulnerable members of the community. St Francis believes that, while protecting children and young people against sexual abuse is a community wide responsibility, schools have particular moral and legal responsibilities to ensure children and young people are safe in their care and to actively and intentionally work to eliminate all forms of abusive behaviours towards children.

### **Children's rights to safety and participation**

The staff and volunteers of St Francis encourage students to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.

We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us.

St Francis' commitment to student rights and responsibilities are detailed in our Pastoral Wellbeing Policy and this policy ensures that the students within our community are afforded the opportunities and rights that they deserve.

### **Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)**

Under this federal legislation, discrimination based on disability is unlawful. It applies to school authorities and their employees. The definition of disability is broad and includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological or learning disability, psychical disfigurement, and the presence in the body of a disease-causing organism. Relevant for enrolments, it is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person's disability, or a disability of any of the other person's associates, by refusing or failing to accept the person's application for admission as a student; or in the terms and conditions on which it is prepared to admit the person as a student. However, it is not unlawful to refuse or fail to accept a person's application for admission as a student in an educational institution where the person, if admitted as a student by the educational authority, would require services or facilities that are not required by students who do not have a disability and the provision of which would impose unjustifiable hardship on the educational authority.

## **VALUING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

We value and celebrate diversity, especially cultural diversity, and we do not tolerate discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students and their families
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) and their families
- promote the personal safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability and make them feel welcome and part of all aspects of school life

## **Enrolment Rationale**

1. The Catholic Church establishes schools because it 'has in a special way the duty and right of educating, for it has a divine mission of helping all to arrive at the fullness of Christian' (Can 794#1)

St Francis Parish Primary School celebrates and teaches the Christian traditions of the Catholic faith. Catholic Christian values are inculcated across all areas of curriculum delivery and action. It 'participates in the evangelising mission of the Church and is the privileged environment in which Christian is carried out. In this way Catholic schools are at once places of evangelisation, of complete formation, of inculturation, of apprenticeship in the lively dialogue between young people of different religions and social backgrounds. The ecclesial nature of a Catholic school therefore, is written in the very heart of its identity as a teaching institution.' (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium 1997 n19)

## **2. Principles**

*St Francis School:*

- Strives to be authentically Catholic and faithful to the Church, its traditions and its teachings.
- Expects that those who choose a catholic school do so on the understanding that they respect and agree to support the Catholic Identity of the school and acknowledge the importance of religious education for their children.
- Is open to all who are willing to commit to support the philosophy, values and aims of Catholic schooling.
- Has a responsibility to welcome, accept and support those who are poor, marginalised and in most need.
- Seeks to include rather than exclude.
- Will try to ensure that the enrolment process is a welcome manifestation of the teachings and values of the Church.
- Is governed by its Canonical Administrator, the Parish Priest, in collaboration with School leadership and the School Board. The Governance body is the responsible authority for our school.
- Will as far as possible, provide facilities for potential enrolments in conjunction with the Governance body and the Diocese.
- Will comply with any State or federal laws, Catholic Education Commission or Diocesan Policies and Guidelines in relation to enrolment.
- Recognises its responsibility to provide access to children baptised in the catholic faith.
- Will respect the traditions of other faiths.
- Will respect the responsibility – Principal, Canonical Administrator, School Board and Staff, for ensuring, that the authentic vision of Catholic education in the community remains the guiding principle of the enrolment policy.

## **3. Policy**

St Francis School is open to all who seek a Catholic Education for their children and who are willing to

support the values and purposes of Catholic Education.

No student will be refused enrolment because of a family's incapacity to pay all or part of the school fees.

Academic, intellectual or physical capacity criteria should not be used as part of the enrolment decision making process.

The enrolment of students with special needs should be considered in the light of the relevant laws, and the policies, guidelines and protocols of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and the Sandhurst School Education Board.

Measures which are deemed to measure the degree of faith commitment of the parents will not be used as criteria for enrolling a Catholic student in a Catholic school.

The enrolment of a student will include continuity of enrolment for all year levels provided by the school. However, school authorities have the decision to discontinue the enrolment in accordance with Diocesan or school policies dealing with such matters.

It is expected practice that a student who has completed Primary Education in our school will be offered continuity of Enrolment at St Mary of the Angels (SMOTA) Catholic Secondary School if so desired.

For Pastoral Care considerations and compassion, the school may give special consideration to individual needs and situations such as:

- Family breakdown.
- Family mobility.
- Parents/guardians unable to make a commitment.
- Late applications in extenuating circumstances.
- Students experiencing serious educational disadvantage.
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- Refugee status.

The enrolment of students will be considered in light of class size parameters as set out in the current Industrial Award and Agreements.

Acceptance of full fee paying overseas students for enrolment may be accommodated if places are available.

#### **4. Enrolment**

*Within the context of 'Principles' and 'Policy' (2 and 3 above) the following criteria will guide the prioritizing of enrolments. NB: Paragraph 8 in Policy statement 3 allows for special considerations.*

- All children must turn five on or before April 30 in the year they commence.
- Children baptized in the Catholic faith who are members of Parish communities.
- Siblings of children baptized in the Catholic faith already enrolled.
- Siblings of other children already enrolled.
- Children of other Christian Churches who, with their parents, respect and agree to support the Catholic mission of the School as in 2 above.
- Children of other faiths who, with their parents, respect and agree to support the Catholic mission of the school as in 2 above.

#### **5. Implementation**

Expressions of interest will be called for early Term 2.

Parents and children will be interviewed by the principal or Principal's nominee prior to the

acceptance of the enrolment application. Copies of the applicant's Baptismal Certificate, if applicable and School Entry Immunisation certificate will need to be obtained.

Successful applicants will be notified early Term 3.

Prospective students will be invited to participate in various orientation activities in Term 4.

Prospective students with disabilities will be treated in accordance with the Standards for Enrolment Section 4 Disability Standards for Education 2005..

Enrolments will be considered throughout the year. Students need to provide;

- Transfer note from former school.
- Copy of School Entry Immunisation Certificate.
- Copy of Baptismal Certificate if applicable.
- Copy of Birth Certificate

## **6. Appeal Process**

Any appeal against a decision to refuse enrolment shall be made to a School Appeal Committee established in the school community to consider such appeals. Membership will comprise the principal, a member of the school's governance body and a Parish Priest/Canonical Administrator (or representative) from the designated region which the school serves.

If an appeal is refused by the School Appeal Committee, a further and final appeal may be made to the SCEC Enrolment Appeal Committee.

An appeal will only be considered where there is evidence of a diversion from the enrolment process contained within the SCEC Enrolment Policy and Guidelines.

The SCEC Enrolment Appeal Committee will be chaired by the Director of Catholic Education (or representative). Other members will include a Parish Priest and a Principal member of the SCEC, both of whom will come from areas outside the parish or designated region which are the subject of the appeal.

The SCEC Enrolment Appeal Committee will give due consideration to the basis for the appeal and to the decision of the School Appeal Committee.

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