



Stella Maris Primary School

Enrolment Policy

Rationale

Parents are the primary educators of their children, and the home is where children first learn tenderness, forgiveness, respect, love and generous service of others

Parents are likewise the first educators of their children in the practice of the faith and the life of the Church. This education should begin in a child's earliest years, and it becomes effective especially when the child learns by the example of family members, and experiences the liturgical life of Christian families in the Parish Eucharist.

As the first educators of their children, parents have a fundamental right to choose the school that they believe will best help them as Christian educators of their children.

When parents ask for their children to be baptised in the Catholic Church, they are declaring that they accept responsibility for training their children in the practice of the Catholic faith. The Church on its part is responsible for providing the educational opportunities that will enable parents to fulfill their role as primary educators.

Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Beaumaris, is dedicated to helping parents and children achieve the goals and purposes stated in this Preamble.

Relationship between the School and the Parish

Stella Maris is a Parish Primary School. It exists because a Parish was proclaimed in Beaumaris and the first major task of the Parish was to provide for the education of the children in a parish Primary School. The people, often many of them without any children at Stella Maris, made great sacrifices in order to meet the need for a Parish Primary School. The first Parish Priest lived for a number of years in a shed on the School/Church property. It is essential that all families who use Stella Maris Parish Primary School also own the Parish. This is usually done by support of the Parish through Planned Giving. All families represented in the School should be contributing to the Parish in the Planned Giving Scheme – at least at the level of the average contribution. This can be done by either taking a set of envelopes and making regular weekly contributions by placing the offering on the collection plate at Mass, or by choosing to have this contribution charged by a special account. This account would be forwarded at the same time as the school fee account.

This is a matter of equity and fairness. The Parish has provided for the School. The Parish bought the land and built the original School. The Parish continues to support and service the School in many ways. It is unfair that people could merely use the School for seven years and not in some way own the means by which the School came into being. Once again every consideration will be given to families who may have difficulties with the capacity to meet this contribution.

THE SCHOOL'S MISSION STATEMENT

At Stella Maris our mission is to:

- ◆ Develop and nurture a deep understanding of Catholic Faith- its teachings, traditions, liturgy and the celebration of the sacraments and feasts. We come to know Jesus through Scripture and each other, as we follow His mission in our day to day lives.
- ◆ Provide the environment, skills and opportunities where individuals can develop a positive sense of self and foster healthy relationships.
- ◆ Interpret and design the curriculum so that it is inclusive, purposeful and challenging while demonstrating best teaching practice, so all learners will realize their full potential.
- ◆ In a spirit of inclusiveness, promote open, active and honest communication and democratic processes.
- ◆ Invite the community to participate in school and Parish based initiatives and seek ways in which we become active global citizens.

ENROLMENT POLICY

The enrolment policy for Stella Maris Catholic Parish Primary School follows the Enrolment Guidelines for Victorian Catholic Schools (November 1983).

Statements from the Bishops of Victoria highlight the Church's obligation to provide that the child, once baptised, be given the opportunity to grow in faith, and that in Australia, an important aspect of that education is to be available normally through the provision of Catholic Schools. By virtue of Baptism a child has a right to a place in a Catholic School.

At Stella Maris, this obligation is met according to the following criteria:

- 1.1 Children who are baptised Catholics and who live in Stella Maris Parish are given first priority for places. Siblings of students currently enrolled will have automatic entry into Stella Maris.
- 1.2 Children who transfer from another Parish Primary School are normally accepted. The only bar to entry would be a large class size that broke the industrial agreement with the staff.

- 1.3 Children who are baptised Catholic, and who live outside the Parish, and whose parents display special necessity or extraordinary circumstances are given third priority.
- 1.4 Children who are baptised in another Christian Church and who live in the local community are given fourth priority.
- 1.5 Children who are non-Christian and who live in the local community are given fifth priority.
- 1.6 Applications from students from outside the Catholic system would be considered according to the other criteria for enrolment.
- 1.7 Enrolment would be subject to the conditions outlined in the Industrial Agreements.

General Statement

- 2.1 Admission to Stella Maris Catholic Parish Primary School comes under the aforesaid categories and in the given order of priority. It presumes that there is adequate accommodation within any given class, having regard to the guidelines of the Catholic Education Office and the requirements of current Industrial Regulations. It further presumes that the arrangement of classes in single or multi-age groupings is the prerogative of the School Principal and his/her staff after due discussion with the School Board.
- 2.2 The ability to pay school fees for children in full or in part will never preclude a child from receiving an education at Stella Maris School. It is presumed however, that parents would be prepared to make appropriate sacrifices to meet their financial obligations. Parents must feel free at all times to discuss any financial difficulties or emergencies with the Parish Priest or the School Principal, so that temporary or longer-term arrangements can be made. Facilities for fees to be paid by appropriate installments are available.
- 2.3 Having first met with the Principal or his/her deputy, who under normal circumstances will make the decision as to the acceptance or not of an enrolment, (in some cases it may be necessary to discuss a particular case with the Parish Priest) all new enrolments are subject to a meeting between the parents and the Parish Priest for pastoral purposes.

During these interviews the following issues would be discussed:

- (a) The Ethos of the Catholic School.
- (b) Its relationship to the Parish.
- (c) The Primacy of the parents as the child educators.
- (d) The financial arrangements necessary to maintain a Catholic Parish School
- (e) The parents' ability to meet financial obligations and where this needs to be varied, discussion as to any variation.

- 2.4 As far as possible, a child transferring from another Catholic school will be offered a place at Stella Maris School.
- 2.5 Attendance at Stella Maris School does not automatically guarantee a place in a Catholic Secondary or Public School or a non-Catholic private school. This is particularly the case with any non-Catholic children who may have a place at Stella Maris School.
- 2.6 Parents of non-Catholic children enrolled at Stella Maris School must be aware of the nature and ethos of the school and undertake that the nature, life and identity of Stella Maris School will be respected. It is expected that such children will attend the ordinary and regular religious education classes at the School. They will be encouraged to attend formal church services.
- 2.7 Parents make the final decision to continue with their enrolment application after the interview with the Parish Priest. For parents of non-Catholic children this involves a decision in respect of the ethos of the Catholic School as the environment in which their child will be educated.
- 2.8 A parent information night will be held for all families who have been enrolled.
- 2.9 Induction sessions for the pre-school students are held during the final term before the child begins School.

School Fees

The necessity to charge school fees remains with us despite Commonwealth and State Government grants to Catholic and other denominational schools. There is still a very substantial gap, between those grants and the actual cost of education at Stella Maris. This gap is made up by way of fees and other recurrent income, i.e. fundraising.

It is a general practice in the Melbourne Archdiocese that Parish Primary School Fees are a Family Fee, i.e. it is the same fee whether there is one child or more than one child.

A Family Fee which is reduced if the voluntary Parish Levy is paid

An Infrastructure and Technology Fee per family.

A Child Levy, calculated per child

A Sacramental Levy per child in Year 3, 4 & 6

Intensive Swimming Program Levy (Non-refundable if your child is on holidays or sick)

(Additional amounts are charged for our Year 5 & Year 6 Camping Program.

Relationship between the School and the Parish

It should be noted that there exists a distinct relationship between the School and the Parish. The two entities are closely interwoven and each cannot exist without the other.

The provision of the school buildings, the many liturgical, spiritual and sacramental practices are largely as a result of the Parish and the Parish Priests, both past and present, through the Planned Giving Program.

It is only fitting therefore, that those families using the school facilities should make every effort to support the Planned Giving Program, not only whilst children are a part of the school community, but also for the time families are a part of the greater Parish Community.

Families not currently contributing to the Planned Giving Program, are asked to show their support for the Program by taking part in the contributions. In this way the financial burden of maintaining the Parish's contribution to the school is shared equally and also ensures the continuing support from the Parish.

Thanksgiving Program

NAME: _____

Are you a current contributor to the Stella Maris Planned Giving Program? YES/NO
(please circle)

If yes, please indicate the number on your envelopes: _____

If no, are you willing to become a member? YES/NO (please circle)

If no, please note that a levy of \$5 per week (\$60 per term) will be applied. This amount is less than the current average contributions to the program.



This policy was ratified in September 2007

This policy will be reviewed annually

This policy was updated in February 2012

