

ENROLMENT POLICY



PREAMBLE

St Columba College is an R-12 Anglican and Catholic College. It is the first of its kind in Australia and is a joint project of the Anglican and Catholic Churches. The College supports and nurtures both faith traditions; providing opportunities for families to enrol their child in an educational environment that is underpinned by our Christian heritage and committed to providing excellent educational opportunities for all students.

1. Enrolment

As an R-12 College, St Columba College has two major enrolment points. The first is for students entering the College at Reception and the second is for students entering the College at Year 8. Students are also accepted into the College at other year levels when opportunities allow.

The College supports the three local Catholic Parish Primary Schools, by providing a pathway for their students into Year 8 at St Columba College. They are thus seen as a priority group in terms of Year 8 enrolment. It is also acknowledged that St Columba College provides a pathway into Year 8 for many students from other local schools. We also acknowledge that many Defence Force families live within our local area and in seeking to support these families we provide to them a level of priority of enrolment.

Taking into account the complexity of enrolment priorities and the fact that demand for enrolment at St Columba College generally exceeds the number of places available, in developing a priority for enrolment, the Principal may utilise certain categories.

2. These categories are not listed in any particular order:

- Children from locally committed Anglican and Catholic families or from families seeking a Christian education and who accept the College ethos.
- The date of the application's lodgement.
- Siblings of families already enrolled at the College.
- Families who live in the Andrews Farm and immediately surrounding areas.
- Students who live within the Playford Council area.
- Families transferring into the area who are already enrolled at a Christian School or who are committed to the Anglican and Catholic traditions.
- Students enrolling at Year 8 from the three Catholic Parish Primary Schools.
- Defence Force families.
- The population balance and specific needs of the College.

3. Enrolment Partnerships - Responsibilities

The College undertakes to support parents in passing on Christian practices and beliefs, based on Anglican and Catholic traditions. It is also committed to offering quality comprehensive education which encourages the students to develop skills, acquire knowledge, and encourages them to actively participate and contribute to their local community and wider society.

Parents are expected to be committed to, and abide by, St Columba's Christian traditions and aims, as stated in the Constitution and other College Policies, in particular maintaining and developing its ethos, academic standards, financial viability, uniform standards, pastoral programs and student behaviour.

Hence, we speak of a partnership where the College honours the ongoing role of parents as teachers/educators of their children and where parents respect and support the professional integrity and expertise of staff. We thus ask parents to be active members of the St Columba community - supporting the College at all levels.



4. Reception Intake

St Columba College will generally have two intakes per year of Reception children.

4.1 Reception Intake - Term One

Children will be eligible to commence Reception at the beginning of the year if they turn 5 years of age on or before 31 March in that year. The child's readiness to begin school will be taken into account when deciding upon a starting date. This will be done in consultation with the parents, the child's kindergarten and the College Principal. It should be noted that the age of compulsion for attending school is 6 years, not 5 years, of age. Some students with disabilities may require an extended period of transition; this will be negotiated with the parent/s and the student's kindergarten.

Generally, students who commence at the beginning of the year, completing four terms in Reception, will proceed to Year 1 in the following year.

4.2 Reception Intake - Term Three

Children will be eligible to commence Reception mid year (Term 3) if they turn 5 years of age on or before 31 August in that year. The criteria used to determine the student's readiness to begin school will be the same as for the Term 1 intake.

Generally, students who commence in the third term require an additional year of Reception and thus undertake six terms in Reception. However, there may be some students who are ready to move to Year 1 after two terms in Reception. The class teacher will make a formal assessment and with the Head of Section make a recommendation to the student's parents as to whether or not the student should remain in Reception or move to Year 1.

Children will normally spend a minimum of 12 terms in Junior Primary (R-2).

5. Year 8 Intake

Students who are already attending the College have a guaranteed pathway through to Year 8 and all other year levels in the Middle and Senior years. A significant number of new students join our College community at Year 8. Priority is given to students transferring from the three local Catholic Parish Primary Schools (providing applications are lodged by the set date); along with other priorities listed in this document.

6. Intake of other Year Levels

Intake at other year levels will depend on availability of places which will be offered according to the previously stated criteria and the various needs of the College.

Families seeking to enrol a student into the College will need to produce the student's current School Report (other than Reception), along with a Birth Certificate and all other relevant documentation that the parent considers may be helpful to the Principal when considering the application.



7. Process of Enrolment - children without Special Needs

- Step 1** Enquiry made to the College - Prospectus, Enrolment Form and information is made available to the parent.
- Step 2** The enrolment application form, along with the required fee, is lodged at the College Administration with all relevant documentation.
- Step 3** If a place is available, an interview with the Principal or nominee will be offered. If a place is not available, the student will be placed on a waiting list.
- Step 4** The Interview: At the interview the following will be discussed:
- Expectations arising from the Anglican and Catholic nature of the College
 - Needs of the child
 - Curriculum
 - Policies and general ethos of the College
 - Role of College Council
 - Role of parent groups
 - Fees and charges
 - Parent expectations
 - College expectations
 - Funding potentials.

The following items should be brought to the interview:

- Child's birth certificate
 - Current school report (for all other than new reception students)
 - Any court orders etc. that may be required.
- Step 5** The Principal makes the decision as to whether or not the child is eligible for enrolment at the College, in accordance with the criteria.
- Step 6** If an enrolment place is offered, parents are given a letter of offer and a letter of guarantee. The letter of guarantee must be returned to the College Administration by the set date duly signed by the adult/adults with the required payment. **If the document is not received by the set date, the position will be re-allocated with no further contact made.**

8. Process of Enrolment - children with Special Needs

The College has adopted the processes for enrolling children with special needs as stated by the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools.

Thus, prior to the College agreeing to enter into an enrolment contract with a parent of a child with a disability/special educational need, it is crucial that both parties have time to investigate and reflect on the specific needs of the child; if the child's needs are best met in a mainstream environment and, if so, how the student can be supported in a mainstream classroom environment. Therefore, some additional enrolment steps take place. They are as follows:

- Step 1** Enquiry made to the College - Prospectus, enrolment form and information is made available to the parent.
- Step 2** The enrolment application form along with the required fee must be lodged at the College Administration with all relevant documentation.



Step 3 If a place is available, an interview with the Principal or nominee will be offered. If a place is unavailable, the student will be placed on a waiting list.

Step 4 The Interview: at the interview the following will be discussed:

- Expectations arising from the Anglican and Catholic nature of the College
- Needs of the child/ specific discussion relating to the child's disability
- Please bring along any supporting documentation
- Curriculum
- Policies and general ethos of the College
- Role of College Council
- Role of parent groups
- Fees and charges
- Parent expectations
- College expectations
- Funding potentials.

The following items should be brought to the interview:

- Child's birth certificate
- Current school report (for all other than new reception students)
- Any court orders etc that may be required.

Step 5 The Principal will request the enrolling adult/s to sign a consent form which enables the College to gather all relevant data/information about the specific needs of the child. A timeline for the process of data gathering is discussed with the enrolling adult/s.

Step 6 Having obtained the family's consent, the Special Education Coordinator collects data from various agencies, previous schools and other professionals involved in the child's development. The College will also involve a Special Educational Consultant from the Catholic Education Office to support this process.

Step 7 A further meeting will be arranged for the Principal and Special Education Coordinator to discuss with the family any relevant information obtained to date. The Consultant from the Catholic Education Office will at times be involved in this meeting.

Step 8 Once all meetings and discussions have occurred the Principal makes the final decision regarding the enrolment, and informs the parents and other members of the enrolment support group.

If an alternative setting is required for the student's specific needs, a special Education representative will support the family in seeking placement, at the family's request.

Step 9 If the enrolment proceeds, the Principal will initiate the development of a College Special Education Plan, which includes a process of ongoing reviews involving parents, teachers and special education specialists.

Step 10 If an enrolment place is offered, parents are given a letter of offer and a letter of guarantee. The letter of guarantee must be returned to the College Administration by the set date duly signed by the adult/s with the required payment. If the document is not received by the set date the position will be re-allocated with no further contact made.



9. Process of Enrolment - Gifted students, early enrolment

The College acknowledges that there are some students who would benefit from early school entry (i.e. prior to normal entry birth dates). In such circumstances, the following process will occur:

- Step 1** If a parent believes that their child is gifted and may benefit from early entry into school, the parent, after first discussing this issue with the Kindergarten Director, makes an appointment to meet with the College Principal.
- Step 2** The Principal will give the parent(s) a list of the information required for the decision-making process to proceed including informing the parents that a full Psychological Assessment is required, along with supporting recommendations from the Director of the Kindergarten and/or other educational and health professionals.
- Step 3** Documentation is collected by the parents and the College. This may include visits to the Kindergarten, as well as the child visiting the College.
- Step 4** A further meeting with parent/s will be held to discuss findings. This meeting will involve the Principal and the Special Education Coordinator.
- Step 5** Depending upon availability of places and the conclusions from the gathered data, the College Principal will decide whether or not the child is eligible for early entry.
- Step 6** If the child is eligible and a place is available, normal enrolment procedures follow.

Documentation Required

- A full psychological assessment by a school-recommended psychologist, providing clear evidence that the child is gifted.
- A recommendation from the Director of the kindergarten.
- Any relevant reports from professionals or agencies.
- A written request from the parents for early entry.

10. Decision Making

A decision will be made as soon as possible by the Principal after the process has been completed.

The Principal has the final say in the decision making process.

The availability of an enrolment place is crucial to the process. If an enrolment place is not available he/she will be placed on a waiting list.