



ENROLMENT POLICY

Rationale

Aquinas College is a Catholic Regional College established to provide secondary education for Catholic boys and girls residing in the parishes of the Eastern Region of Melbourne, centred particularly on the Maroondah Deanery. A Regional College means that, rather than be governed by a religious order, Aquinas is governed by the parishes that established the College in 1961. The Aquinas College Enrolment Policy is underpinned by the Catholic Education Office Melbourne (CEM) Policy 2.4, 'Enrolment for Schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne'

General Principles

- Aquinas College was established to provide Catholic Secondary Education to Catholic students first and foremost who reside in the Parish boundaries of Ringwood, Ringwood North, Mitcham, Park Orchards/Warrandyte and Croydon.
- Aquinas College is a committed and active Catholic community, embracing the ideals of St Thomas Aquinas, St Dominic, the ideals of wisdom and inspiration, as well as the ethos of our patrons Blessed Edmund Rice and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. Aquinas strives to bring Christ to the world through staff and students formed by a comprehensive Catholic education. Inspired by Gospel values and mindful of our Catholic identity, our Vision is to ignite the fire of learning and shine as a beacon of excellence, hope and love in the world.
- In choosing Catholic education at Aquinas, parents/guardians fully understand, respect and agree to support the Catholic identity, Vision and Mission of the College and encourage their child to embrace our six core values: Spirituality, Belonging, Perseverance, Compassion, Stewardship and Justice.
- Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne have a responsibility to ensure that the requirements of State and Commonwealth legislation are met when processing enrolments.
- Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne have a responsibility to adhere to the guidelines as set by CEM in relation to Priority Parish boundaries and will encourage those residing outside their Parish boundaries to apply at a Catholic school within their boundaries, should one exist.
- Should Catholic applications exceed the number of places available in any given year, Catholic families who cannot be accommodated will be advised as soon as possible after the date for applications close and, where possible, referred to another Catholic Secondary school.
- Successful enrolment is not made on any criteria based on academic results or academic assessment of applicants.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to make a commitment to the payment of school fees for the duration of the enrolment. The College has processes in place to assist families in need of Fee Concession. No student will be refused enrolment or be disadvantaged because of an inability on the part of Parents/Guardians to meet financial requirements.

Enrolment Procedure

- Enrolment information is delivered to the neighbouring Parish Primary schools at the start of the Grade 5 school year for all children in that year level. Application for Enrolment forms are available online via the College Website when enrolment opens in any given year.
- Application for Enrolment opens in February of the Grade 5 year and closes in the August of the same year (specific closing dates are published on the College website). A letter confirming the application has been received is mailed out to all applicants.
- An application form will only be accepted;
 - If it is signed by both Parents/Guardians
 - Has a Statutory Declaration, Court Orders or a Parenting Plan attached if it is only signed by one parent/guardian
 - Has proof of residence
 - Has relevant Catholic sacrament certificates accompanying it
 - Includes payment of the \$50 application fee.
- Enrolment at Aquinas College requires application by both parents/guardians unless there is a compelling reason why it is being made by one parent/guardian only. Where there is shared custody, a Statutory Declaration must be signed by the enrolling parent/guardian stating the reason that they cannot obtain signatures from the other parent/guardian and acknowledging that they will take sole responsibility for the cost of education incurred over the period of enrolment at the College. Acceptance of the Statutory Declaration is at the discretion of the Principal.
- If there are specific Court Orders that give the decision making role in regards to education to one parent, a copy of these orders must be provided.
- All applications received within the opening and closing dates will be considered based on our enrolment criteria.
- Letters of offer are sent to the residential address of the enrolling student. Unless it has been already indicated that one parent will sign the enrolment forms, the Supplementary Enrolment Form sent with the letter of offer must be signed by both parents. Returned with this form must be the Fee Agreement form, Photo Permission form and receipt of payment for the \$300 Acceptance Fee. Only when all these documents are received within the time frame indicated in the letter of offer, is the position secured.
- By accepting the position of enrolment, Parents/Guardians and the enrolling students agree to live out the College Mission and abide by the rules as set out by the College. Parents/Guardians by signing the Supplementary Enrolment form and accepting the letter of offer also agree to take responsibility for the payment of school fees. If at any time during the duration of the enrolment a family needs fee assistance, this should be communicated to the Business Manager.

Enrolment Criteria

This Enrolment Criteria describes the Enrolment Categories in descending order of priority offer. In practice, this means that the College accepts all enrolments from Category 1 before moving to Category 2 and so on through the various categories until it reaches its maximum enrolment number of approximately 300 students including St Mary's students into the Year 7 class.

Category	Description
Category 1	Catholic children residing in the Parishes of Mitcham, Croydon, Park Orchards/Warrandyte, Ringwood & Ringwood North and attending Catholic Primary schools. Catholic children in the above Parishes who have received the sacraments.
Category 2	Catholic children residing in the Parishes of Bayswater, Wantirna & Boronia and attending Catholic Primary schools. Catholic children in the above Parishes who have received the sacraments.
Category 3	Catholic children residing in the Parishes of Scoresby, Mooroolbark and other neighbouring Parishes and attending Catholic Primary schools. Catholic children in the above Parishes who have received the sacraments.
Category 4	Catholic children residing in the above parishes
Category 5	Non Catholic Oriental Church children attending Catholic schools in Category 1, 2 & 3 and in that order of priority. Other non-Catholic Oriental church children in the parishes of Category 1, 2 & 3 in that order.
Category 6	Non-Catholic children attending Catholic schools in Category 1, 2 & 3 and in that order of priority. The number of years in a Catholic Primary school will be taken into account.
All other applicants	Priority is given where in the view of the College Principal, the young person and their family will benefit from a Catholic education. Letters of commendation from a member of the Council of Canonical Administrators of Aquinas College assists the Principal in determining enrolment priority within this grouping.