

# Hunter Christian School

## Enrolment Policy



*Updated June 2024*

### Introduction

The NSW Education Act (1990) sets out requirements for enrolment of students at school.

The law in NSW states that all children between the ages of 6 and 17 years of age are required to attend school regularly (Section 22 Education Reform Act 1990). It is the responsibility of parents or caregivers to make sure that their children attend school every day unless there is a justified reason. Section 21B of the Act states that a child is of compulsory school age when the child is of or above the age of 6 years and below the minimum school leaving age.

The minimum school leaving age is:

1. the age at which the child completes Year 10 of secondary education (subject to participation listed below), or
2. the age of 17 years, whichever first occurs.

A child who completes Year 10 of secondary education but who is below the age of 17 years is of compulsory school age unless the child participates on a full-time basis in

1. approved education or training, or
2. if the child is of or above the age of 15 years - paid work or a combination of approved education or training and paid work.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to show that the school is meeting the legislative requirements of student enrolment at Hunter Christian School.

### Source of Obligation

The NSW Registration Manual (3.8) requires the Executive Principal of the school to keep a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments of all children at the school.

The NSW Registration Manual (3.6) requires the school to provide a safe and supportive environment by maintaining a student enrolment register.

## Policy Statement

Hunter Christian School will uphold the NSW Education Act (1990), with explicit notice of Section 22 Education Reform Act 1990.

Throughout this policy, unless the context requires otherwise, a reference to parents includes guardians or caregivers or any other person who has applied to have a child entered on the waiting list or enrolled at the school and, where the child has only one parent, means that parent.

1. Applications for enrolment may be made at any time by the parent of students to commence at Hunter Christian School.
2. Students enrolling in Kindergarten at Hunter Christian School must be five years of age on or before 31 March (unless special consideration has been granted by the Executive Principal).
3. The school will base any decision about offering a place to a student on:
  - 3.1. Family relationship with the school:
    - 3.1.1. sibling of a current or ex-student.
    - 3.1.2. either parent attended the school.
    - 3.1.3. child of a staff member of the school.
    - 3.1.4. they hold attitudes, values and priorities that are compatible with the school's ethos.
  - 3.2. The student:
    - 3.2.1. the contribution that the student may make to the school, including the co-curricular activities.
    - 3.2.2. the student's reports from previous schools or prior to school service e.g. the NSW Department of Education's Transition to School Statement.
  - 3.3. The school:
    - 3.3.1. ability to meet the special needs or abilities of the student.
  - 3.4. Other considerations:
    - 3.4.1. Order of receipt - when the application to enrol is received by the school.
4. The school will meet with the parent/s and the student before offering a place.
5. The school has absolute discretion in determining the weight of each of the factors it takes into account in determining whether to offer a place for the student.
6. Continued enrolment at the school is dependent upon the student making satisfactory academic progress, attending consistently, upholding the ethos of the school, and the student observing all behavioural codes of conduct and other requirements of the school which the school deems appropriate.
7. Continued enrolment at the school is also dependent upon the parents continuing to support the enrolment contract, uphold the ethos of the school, commit to honouring fees, and observe the Parental codes of conduct throughout the duration of the child's education.

## Procedures

Before applying for enrolment parents should read:

1. the enrolment policy;
2. the current fees schedule; and
3. the terms and conditions of enrolment.

All documents are available on the school's website or can be sent to families on request.

## *New Enquiries*

The Family Engagement Team will provide enquiring prospective parents:

1. information about the enrolment process;
2. an invitation to attend a school tour; and
3. an invitation to complete an application for enrolment form which includes a copy of the statement of faith and conditions of enrolment.

## *Applications for Enrolment*

All applications for enrolment must be:

1. via the school's official application form;
2. signed by the parents;
3. lodged with a non-refundable application fee of \$250, paid online via credit card when the application is lodged.

The following documentation is requested to be included in the child's enrolment application:

1. completed application for enrolment form (signed by parents);
2. the \$250 non-refundable enrolment application fee paid;
3. a copy of the child's birth certificate or passport (and current visa confirming student citizenship or permanent residency status, if applicable). **Note:** *Hunter Christian School is not CRICOS accredited and cannot accept applications from international students;*
4. a copy of an immunisation certificate (or notification in writing that the child is unimmunised);
5. copies of the child's last two school reports (if applicable);
6. latest NAPLAN results (if applicable);
7. any relevant medical, psychological or other reports about the child (if applicable); and
8. any other information about the child which the school considers necessary.

Once an application is received, the Executive Principal or delegate will consider it based on the school's enrolment policy criteria.

## *Entry into Kindergarten*

Children need to turn 5 on or before 31<sup>st</sup> March of the year they enter into Kindergarten.

All children must undertake a readiness-for-school assessment conducted by the Discovery Team or delegate. If parents have already indicated specific learning needs, an alternative and/or additional assessment process may be required.

For those who do not turn 6 until after the end of the fourth term of the proposed year of entry, and who are assessed as being not yet ready for school, the Executive Principal may require an additional

assessment process to be undertaken to determine whether or not the child has specific learning needs. The Executive Principal reserves the right to defer the enrolment to the following year.

In respect of any prospective enrolment, the school reserves the right to have members of its staff visit the child's preschool or early intervention centre to more accurately assess the learning needs of the child.

### **Assessment**

The school may undertake standardised assessment testing at a time determined by the school after an enrolment application has been received for a child. As part of the assessment process, the school may ask the parents to provide more information about the child.

Any assessments or reports required from non-school personnel will be at the parent's expense.

In considering all prospective enrolments, the school may ask parents to authorise the Executive Principal or delegate to contact:

1. the Executive Principal of the child's previous school to obtain or confirm information pertaining to the child or the child's enrolment;
2. any medical or other personnel considered significant for providing information pertaining to the needs of the child.

Where information obtained by the school suggests a profile of wilful misconduct, illegal activities or strong anti-social behaviours that indicate that the child's enrolment at the school is likely to be detrimental to other students, the staff or the school; or the parents may not be able to meet the financial commitment required by having a child at the school, notwithstanding that the child is the sibling of a current student, the Executive Principal may decline to proceed any further with the enrolment process.

### **Interview**

The school will at its discretion invite the parents and the student (applying to enrol) to attend an interview at the school with the Executive Principal and/or delegate. At the interview, among other things, the school's representative will:

1. seek to establish that the expectations and commitments of the parents and the child are consistent with the ethos, vision, values, goals, policies and resources of the school;
2. inform the parents of their responsibility to the school in relation to fees and ascertain their ability to afford the fees.

### **Offer**

At the satisfactory conclusion of the enrolment process, the school may make an offer to the parents to enrol the child. If the school makes an offer of enrolment or conditional offer of enrolment the parents must within 14 days of receiving it:

1. sign the conditions of enrolment which confirms acceptance by the parents of the conditions of enrolment;
2. complete an enrolment acceptance slip.

The school must be informed of any change of address or contact details after an offer (or conditional offer) of enrolment is made.

Any questions concerning enrolment should be referred to the Family Engagement Team at the school.

Failure to reply within the required time may result in the offer being withdrawn and re-offered to another child waiting for entry to the school.

### **Register of Enrolments**

The Family Engagement Team on behalf of the Executive Principal maintains a register of enrolments that includes the following information:

1. student's name, date of birth and gender;
2. name and address of parent(s)/guardian(s);
3. date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination;
4. students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation;

The register of enrolments is retained by the Family Engagement Team for a minimum period of seven (7) years before archiving.

### **Change of Year of Entry**

Parents may request to change the year of entry for a student. Such requests must be in writing to the Executive Principal and approval is at the discretion of the Executive Principal or delegate. If a change of year of entry is approved, the student's name returns to the list for the new year of entry, retaining the initial application date. The assessment process, including the interview, may recommence. If the enrolment fee has been paid, it does not need to be paid again.

### **Waiting Lists**

The Executive Principal is responsible for the maintenance of waiting lists for entry to the school. Entrance to the school is normally in Kindergarten. Entrance at other year levels is limited to vacancies that may occur from time to time. Entrance may be accommodated at any time throughout the school year depending on circumstances. Names of children will be entered on the appropriate waiting list only once they have successfully completed all required stages of the enrolment process.

Failure to provide all required information may result in the school declining to enter the child's name on the appropriate waiting list and may also result in the school declining or delaying the child's enrolment.

### **School Reserves Rights**

The school reserves the right to place any child on conditional enrolment or not to offer a place to any child or defer the offer of a place to any child at its discretion but particularly when the parents, having been aware of their child's specific educational needs, decline to declare those needs or to withhold relevant information pertaining to their child.

The school reserves the right in line with the school's enrolment policy to determine if/when:

1. the Executive Principal or delegate will conduct an interview with parents and the student applying for enrolment, at which the parent's expectations and the student's needs will be discussed.
2. the school will adopt other procedures as a part of the enrolment process e.g. meeting with the School Accountant
3. the school makes an offer of enrolment and/or
4. the school makes a conditional offer of enrolment and/or
5. the school declines to make an offer of enrolment and/or
6. a child's name will be placed on a waiting list and if an offer will be made when a place becomes available and/or
7. the school will reconsider an application not more than two years prior and/or

8. the school will withdraw an offer of enrolment.

The school also reserves the right to terminate an enrolment where the parents have not declared or have withheld known information pertaining to their child's needs.

The school reserves the right to determine the appropriate year of entry for each student.

## **Disability**

While the school will not suit all children, there is no reason in principle that children with disabilities cannot be eligible to enrol. Indeed, the school has since its inception enrolled students with disabilities. Please refer to the Schedule – Disability for the school's policy regarding disability. The school will follow this policy when assessing an application for a child with a disability.

## **Student Withdrawal**

Parents are required to provide one full term's notice of a student's withdrawal from the school in writing to the Executive Principal. Failure to provide a full term's notice will incur the charge of one full term's fees (per student) in lieu of notice. This notice must be given prior to the commencement of the student's last term of attendance.

Before a student's last day of attendance and to comply with government guidelines, parents must provide a student's destination e.g. 'new school' details. Where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, the school will refer this matter to the Department of Education and School Liaison Officer. The Family Engagement Team will provide details including the student's full name, date of birth, last known address, last date of attendance, parent's names and contact details, an indication (if known) of a possible destination and any other information that may assist to locate the student, and any known work health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents or student. This information is also recorded on the student record.

## **Schedule - Disability**

### **Relevant Legislation**

1. Disability Discrimination Act (1992);
2. Sex Discrimination Act (1984);
3. Racial Discrimination Act (1975);
4. Anti-Discrimination Act (1991).

These Acts make it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their disability, sex, or race by refusing to enrol them at the school. The school is committed to fulfilling its obligations under the law in its enrolment policy.

### **Definition**

*Disability*, in relation to a child, means:

1. total or partial loss of the child's bodily or mental functions; or
2. total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
3. the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
4. the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
5. the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the child's body; or
6. a disorder or malfunction that results in the child learning differently from a child without the disorder or malfunction; or

7. a disorder, illness or disease that affects a child's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;
8. and includes a disability that:
  - 8.1. presently exists; or
  - 8.2. previously existed but no longer exists; or
  - 8.3. may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or
  - 8.4. is imputed to a person.

To avoid doubt, a disability that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.

## **Disability Policy in the Enrolment Process**

Where a child has declared education support needs or a disability or other information has come to light indicating a possible need for education support services or for some measures or actions to assist the child to participate in the school's courses or programs or to use the school's facilities or services, the school will make an initial assessment of the child's needs. This will include consultation with the child and/or the child's parents. In addition, the Executive Principal may:

1. require the parents to provide medical, psychological or other reports from specialists outside the school;
2. obtain an independent assessment of the child.

Where information obtained by the school indicates that the child has a disability, the Executive Principal or delegate will seek to identify the exact nature of the child's needs and the strategies required to address them. Having obtained this information, the Executive Principal will determine whether the child, if enrolled, would require some measures or actions to assist the child to participate in the school's courses or programs or to use the school's facilities or services that are not required by students who do not have the child's disability. Where the Executive Principal determines that the child would require some such measures or actions, the Executive Principal will seek to identify whether those measures or actions required are reasonable in that they balance the interests of all parties affected. In assessing whether a particular measure or action for a particular child is reasonable, the Executive Principal will have regard to all the relevant circumstances and interests, including:

1. the child's disability;
2. the views of the child or the child's parents about:
  - 2.1. whether the particular measure or action is reasonable;
  - 2.2. the extent to which the particular measure or action would ensure that the child was able to participate in the school's courses or programs or to use the school's facilities or services on the same basis as a child without the disability;
3. the effect of the adjustment on the child, including the effect on the child's:
  - 3.1. ability to achieve learning outcomes; and
  - 3.2. ability to participate in courses or programs; and
  - 3.3. independence;
4. the effect of the particular measure or action on anyone else affected, including the school, its staff and other students;
5. the costs and benefits of taking the particular measure or action.

The school will take measures and actions that are reasonable but will not necessarily take measures or actions that impose unjustifiable hardship on the school. In determining whether taking the required measures or actions, even though they are reasonable, would impose unjustifiable hardship on the school, the Executive Executive Executive Principal will take into account all relevant circumstances of the case, including:

1. the nature of the benefit or detriment likely to accrue or be suffered by any persons concerned (including other students, staff, the school, the child, the family of the child, and the school community); and
2. the effect of the disability of the child; and
3. the school's financial circumstances and the estimated amount of expenditure required to be made by the school; and
4. the availability of financial and other assistance to the school.

Where the Executive Principal determines that the enrolment of the child would require the school to take unreasonable measures or actions to ensure that the child is able to participate in the school's courses or programs or to use the school's facilities and services, on the same basis as a student without a disability, or would cause unjustifiable hardship, the Executive Principal may decline the offer of a position or defer the offer.

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Other Policy & Legislation Relationships	Attendance Policy Staff Handbook Annual School Report Discovery Team Policy Disability Discrimination Act (1992) Sex Discrimination Act (1984) Racial Discrimination Act (1975) Anti-Discrimination Act (1991) NSW Registration Manual
Document Location	SharePoint/SLT/Policies/Safe & Supportive Environment – Student Welfare
Date of Issue/Last Revision	June 2024
Review Date	June 2025
Policy Review	This policy will be reviewed every year, or as needed, in line with legislative changes
Applies to	Hunter Christian School Limited