

## ENROLMENT POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Bulleen Heights School on 9850 7122.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to specify entry eligibility criteria for students seeking enrolment at Bulleen Heights School and the evidence required to support enrolment.

It is intended to provide clarity for the local community on the entry criteria and ensure a smooth and supported transition for enrolling students.

### SCOPE

Enrolment at Bulleen Heights School is based on a student's educational needs. Subject to capacity, student intake may be at any stage of the year, providing the student is of school age and satisfies the eligibility criteria.

### POLICY

#### BACKGROUND

Bulleen Heights School is a government specialist school providing educational programs for students with disability and high needs who have autism. The school welcomes students from 5 to 18 years of age.

Students enrolling at our school as part of a foundation (prep) intake will be required to provide proof of age (indicating that they have turned 5 years of age by the 30<sup>th</sup> April of that year) and an immunisation certificate identifying current status of immunisation. Maximum age of enrolment - Students complete their final year of school in their 18<sup>th</sup> year.

A child who is less than the minimum age of entry for Victorian schools but has transferred from an interstate school is eligible for enrolment. Evidence of age and full-time enrolment at the interstate school must be provided.

Other parents seeking early age entry for their children must make a written application to the regional director of the North Eastern Victorian Region.

Bulleen Heights School has special entry criteria approved by the Minister for Education. The school has been designed with flexibility to allow it to operate to meet the diverse needs of students with autism.

By law in Victoria all children aged between 6 and 17 years must be enrolled at a registered school or registered for home schooling unless they have a reasonable excuse.

School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with a comprehensive educational program and access to support networks. It also helps to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and active participation in their local community.

## **ENTRY CRITERIA**

The following entry eligibility criteria have been specified and approved by the Regional Director, North East Victorian Region (as the Minister's delegate), in accordance with section 2.2.16(b) of the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#) (Vic).

The eligibility criteria have been carefully considered and determined based on data analysis of Bulleen Heights School's surrounding area indicating a need to support enrolments of students who fit the following criteria.

Students seeking to enrol must:

- A clear medical statement of diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. A written statement of diagnosis from either a child psychiatrist or a paediatrician is required.
- A statement of diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder by a psychologist which also includes a demonstration of significant deficits in adaptive behaviour established by a composite score of two standard deviations or more below the mean on the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales – III Comprehensive Teacher Form. A report of assessment is required from a registered psychologist which includes a clear diagnosis of ASD. Note that this is a diagnostic assessment of ASD, not an assessment of cognitive functioning (IQ).
- A core language score of two or more standard deviations below the mean or evidence (and a cohesive case presented) that in the school context the student's expressive and receptive language skills are functionally within the severe language disorder range. The assessment findings must also include a statement to the effect that the results of the assessment are consistent with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. A statement from a registered speech pathologist using an approved language test is required. Be informed that applications on the sole basis of pragmatic skill deficits are unlikely to succeed.
- A history and evidence of an ongoing problem with the expectation of continuation during school years. Report by either a medical practitioner or psychologist would normally demonstrate history.

The Department will provide an external enrolment verification process to support the school in confirming students meet the above eligibility criteria.

Applications from students who do not satisfy the above criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the region, in consultation with the Principal, in consideration of the student's individual needs. The Regional Director, North East Victorian Region has overall authority for approving enrolments for students who do not meet the eligibility criteria. Approved enrolments may be subject to specific conditions, such as an annual review.

### **PRIORITY ORDER OF PLACEMENT**

In the event that there is a larger number of applications than the number of places available, Bulleen Heights School will limit enrolments to meet the designated school capacity.

Where there are insufficient places at the school for all students who seek entry, **students who meet the eligibility criteria** will be enrolled according to the following priority order of placement:

1. Students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time.
2. Students who reside nearest to the school.

The school must ensure that all applicants eligible under the first criterion have been offered a place before moving to consideration of the second criterion.

### **Enrolment on compassionate grounds**

In exceptional circumstances, a student may be enrolled in Bulleen Heights School based on compassionate grounds. This is an overarching consideration and does not form part of the priority order of placement. The school will assess and make a determination for applications on compassionate grounds on a case-by-case basis.

### **EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

To support a student's application for enrolment, the following evidence should be provided:

#### **For students with autism:**

A multidisciplinary diagnosis provided by professionals with experience and knowledge in the assessment of Autism Spectrum Disorder that includes:

- a comprehensive report from a child psychiatrist or paediatrician;
- a signed report from a psychologist providing an assessment of adaptive behaviour (not more than 12 months old);
- a signed report from a speech pathologist containing a current comprehensive speech pathology assessment (not more than 12 months old) and where appropriate, an occupational therapist.

If a student does not have a current assessment, the school may refer the student to Assessments Australia to enable the assessment to be completed.

In addition, where demand exceeds places available at Bulleen Heights School, the school may ask for any or all of the following documentation to support the enrolment application and an assessment against the priority order of placement:

1. Rental agreements or unconditional contracts of sale, plus
2. A copy of two of the following:
  - electoral enrolment confirmation
  - council rates notices
  - other official documentation that demonstrates permanent residency at that address such as a driver's license or health care card.

Documents should show the same address and parent's/carer's name as recorded on the school enrolment application form.

*NOTE: Enrolment applications may not be successful if the requested documentation is not provided.*

### **Verification of permanent address**

When assessing enrolment applications under the priority order of placement, Bulleen Specialist School may make the following enquiries to verify the information provided:

- checking the electoral roll at an Australian Electoral Commission office or the Victorian Electoral Commission head office;
- checking with a real estate agent to confirm a rental address;
- checking whether the landline contact phone number provided is registered to the residence provided on the enrolment form;
- for a rental property which is a studio apartment or a one-bedroom unit, checking whether there are any regulations/codes limiting the occupancy of these apartments to one person per apartment.

The enrolment application may be unsuccessful if, after reasonable enquiries, the Principal is unable to verify that the evidence provided is genuine and valid. Applicants may then seek to appeal the decision according to the Appeal process outlined below.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

Parents/carers are able to appeal against Bulleen Heights School's decision not to provide a placement. This can occur in relation to placements at any age level and the following process applies:

1. **Appeal to the school's placement committee and/or Principal** Appeals are to be made in writing and lodged with the Principal.

The school's decision will be communicated to the parent/carer in writing. In assessing the appeal, the school will check to ensure compliance with the priority order of placement, and the processes for verifying permanent address, as appropriate.

2. **Appeal to the Regional Director**

If the appeal at the school level is unsuccessful and parents/carers are not satisfied that their appeal has been adequately considered, they are able to escalate this by lodging an appeal in writing to:

Regional Director, North Eastern Victoria Region, Ph: 1300 333 231, Email:  
[nevr@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:nevr@education.vic.gov.au)

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Made available publicly on our school website
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read alongside and in conjunction with the following Department policies:

- [Enrolment](#)
- [Exemptions from School Attendance and Enrolment](#)
- [Schools' Privacy Policy](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	29.3.2022
Approved by	Principal – Susan Merjan
Next scheduled review date	20.11.2022

This policy is subject to review by the school Principal on an annual basis, prior to the enrolment process commencing each year. Proposed updates will be made on a need's basis, with any proposed changes relating to entry criteria and priority order of placement requiring approval from the Regional Director.