

Enrolment

Berengarra takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 870 (2015)

Policy Statement

Under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, schooling is compulsory for students aged between 6 and 17 years unless an exemption from attendance has been granted.

Purpose of this policy

Berengarra School is committed to ensuring that students are enrolled in the school in a manner that is fair and transparent. In achieving this standard, the School will ensure comprehensive and accurate information is provided to parents as they enter into an enrolment agreement with the School.

The School is committed to maintaining accurate records that comply with the school's legal obligations in relation to school enrolment.

The enrolment policy sets out the principles and framework governing the basis on which students are admitted to the School.

Principles

- The School is committed to ensuring students are admitted to the School in a manner that is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory.
- The School will publish clear criteria as the basis on which admissions are made.
- The School will provide comprehensive and accurate information about the enrolment process including information about the school, the School's service provision and the School's expectations of parental and student behaviour, so that parents are in a position to make informed choices when entering into an enrolment agreement or contract.
- The School keeps and retains accurate records of school enrolments that comply with its commonwealth and state legal and regulatory requirements.

Legal and regulatory requirements

- When enrolling a student with a disability, schools are required to consider what **reasonable adjustments** need to be made to the learning environment or to the delivery of learning to assist that student.
- Schools are advised to require **proof of age and enrolment name** for each enrolment. Such documentation could be in the form of a birth certificate or passport
- Under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth.) schools are required to collect **Student Background Characteristics Data** as part of the school enrolment process and report the data to the VCAA when requested.

- **The Annual Report to the School Community**¹ must include a report on the characteristics of students at the school.
- **The Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth.) requires student enrolment records to be retained for seven years**² after end of school year in which the last entry was made. Student enrolment records may be **audited** by either state or commonwealth authorities in order for the authorities to monitor payments made on the basis of student numbers or on the basis of the enrolment of particular categories of students
- Records of enrolment are required for annual data returns for the Australian Government non-government schools and the Victorian school census under Australian Education Regulation 2013
- **Legislative privacy requirements**³ govern how **personal, sensitive and health** information must be collected, used, disclosed and stored as part of the enrolment process. A **privacy notice** must be provided with the enrolment form explaining to parents and students why this information is being collected, what it is used for, where it might be disclosed and how they can access information held about them. The enrolment agreement should make reference to the Privacy Policy.
- Schools are required to request and record the immunisation status, called the **Child History Statement**, for each primary student prior to enrolment. [Schools should also request this information for secondary enrolments.]

Enrolment Agreement

An Enrolment Agreement (as required by VRQA) with parents or guardians, covers codes of conduct, fees, educational services provided, the grounds on which the Enrolment Agreement may be terminated and **must be publicly available on the school website**.

Parents/caregivers must also be able to access enrolment forms, the parent payment policy and a schedule of charges for the school.

Information Required at Enrolment

- date of birth (note: evidence of date of birth can be official, such as a birth certificate or where this is not able to be produced, unofficial, such as a doctor's note attesting to a child's age).
- names and addresses of the student and enrolling parent or carer
- details of medical and other conditions that may require special consideration
- emergency telephone numbers, including a nominated doctor
- an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register
- the name of the previous school/s

Referrals

All Berengarra School students require specialist support to meet the diverse social and emotional challenges with which they present. While a formal diagnosis is not mandatory to

¹ As required to meet Commonwealth and State legislative requirements.

² <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2013L01476> (Accessed 22 July 2017)

³ Privacy and Data Protection Act (Vic) 2014; Privacy Act (Cth.) 1988.

access Berengarra School, students commonly present with a variety of mental health disorders and/or learning disabilities including:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Anxiety disorders
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Oppositional-Defiance Disorder (ODD)
- Conduct Disorder
- Depressive disorders
- Eating disorders
- Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD)
- Developmental trauma
- Bipolar Disorder
- Specific Learning Disabilities (e.g. Dyslexia, Dysgraphia)
- Language disorders

Additionally, Berengarra School students will also present with one or more of the following:

- A history of difficulties engaging in learning that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors
- A history of difficulties building and/or maintaining functional relationships with peers and staff
- Behaviours that can be challenging within a school setting
- High levels of anxiety particularly related to the school environment, for example, social anxiety or anxiety around learning
- Persistent and pervasively low mood, sense of unhappiness or depression
- A history of lengthy periods of disengagement from school or issues with school attendance/school refusal

Enrolment at Berengarra School may be through referral from schools, families, medical and mental health professionals e.g. psychiatrists and psychologists, child and family agencies.

Enrolment criteria

1. The student has been diagnosed with, or demonstrates the characteristics of, a social/emotional disability
2. The student has a history of significant difficulty engaging in, and responding to, mainstream education
3. The student has an IQ close to 80 or above
4. The student's needs are able to be met within the current processes and resources of the school
5. Parents/carers/guardians are willing to support school policies and procedures
6. The student is unlikely to cause significant or persistent harm to others
7. The student has the potential to attend a full-time school program
8. The student displays motivation to attend

Supporting Legislation

Education and Training Reform Act 2006
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992
Disability Standards for Education 2005

Evaluation:

This policy will be evaluated as part of the school review cycle.

Date endorsed by Board: April 2018; Dec 2019 Review date: Dec 2023

(Updated to meet new VRQA requirements April 2020)