



Admissions and Enrolment Policy

Contents

1. Purpose.....	1
2. Enrolment Age	2
3. Class & Group sizes.....	2
4. Children with additional needs and support requirements.....	3
5. Admissions information	3
6. Legislative requirements for Kindergarten Admissions	4
7. Admission Information.....	4
8. Enrolment in School.....	5
9. Waitlists	5
10. Financial Information.....	6
11. Exit Interviews.....	6
12. Definitions	7
13. Dispute resolution.....	8
14. Declaration	8

1. Purpose

To provide the policy for admission to the Ballarat Steiner School, Kindergarten and Playgroup program.

1.1 Equity

Ballarat Steiner School, Kindergarten and Playgroup accepts applications for admission from all families and children, subject to Australian Citizenship, Permanent Residency and Visa legislation. Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten does not discriminate based on race, colour, gender, sexuality, physical or mental disability, religion, or socioeconomic status. Enrolment processes shall be open, fair, and transparent.

1.2 Relevant Legislation or Authority

The Victorian Department of Education and Training requires funded organisations to meet the VRQA Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration, including that:

A school must have a clear enrolment policy that complies with all applicable State and Commonwealth laws including those relating to discrimination and the duty to make reasonable adjustments, equal opportunity, privacy, immunisation, and the Australian Consumer Law.

The Australian Education Act and the Australian Education Regulations 2013 set out schools' funding accountability, and set out the use of funds and accountability requirements.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 require approved services to have policy and procedures in place in relation to enrolment and orientation (Regulation 168(2)(k)).

Early childhood education and care services which are regulated under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 have legislative responsibilities under the Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Act 2015 to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with acceptable immunisation documentation (refer to Definitions).

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

1. Australian Education Act 2013 (Commonwealth)
2. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)
3. Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (VIC)
4. Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (VIC)
5. Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
6. Education and Care National Regulations 2011
7. Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)
8. Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Regulations 2015 (Vic)
9. Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth)
10. Schools Assistance - Learning Together – Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity Act 2004 (Commonwealth).

1.3 Non- denominational

Steiner schools are non-denominational.

1.4 The school's expectations

When a student is enrolled, the student's parents/guardians are bound by the policies and procedures of Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten.

2. Enrolment Age

The school complies with the relevant regulatory bodies in relation to start ages for children in our Kindergarten and Foundation programs. Children are enrolled according to their age as at 31st of December of each year. Ages of participation are as follows;

Group/Class	Age
Playgroup	Birth to 3.5 years (inclusive)
Little Kindergarten	In the year they turn 4 years
Kindergarten	In the year they turn 5 years
Foundation	In the year they turn 6 years

Variations to this may occur for children enrolling post the foundation year and for those children who may benefit from a 2nd year of kindergarten.

3. Class & Group Sizes

Variations to the below may be approved by the Committee of Management, on recommendation from the Head of School. A Class teacher may apply to the Head of School to cap enrolments to their class, at either lower or higher numbers, for reasons such as;

- additional needs in the class
- to allow the class to consolidate

Group / Class	Size
Playgroup Group – per session	10
Kindergarten Group – per day	22
Foundation, Class 1 – 6, per day	26

4. Children with additional needs and support requirements

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and Disability Standards for Education 2005, it is the responsibility of an education system to give the same opportunities and choices on enrolment of a student with a disability as those offered to other prospective students without disabilities.

The school will work within the parameters of the;

- Relevant state and federal Equal Opportunity legislation
- Relevant disability discrimination legislation
- Disability Standards for Education (2005)
- School policy for Students with Additional Needs

If it becomes apparent during pre-offer enrolment interview(s) that the child has additional needs and will require support, the school will arrange additional interviews with specialist support staff, parents, teachers, and the Head of School. Discussions will include appropriate support and reasonable adjustments that can be made by the school.

Parents will be asked to submit relevant school and/or health reports that provide information for staff on how best to meet the child's needs at the time of enrolment.

5. Admissions Information

Except for Playgroup, all applications for enrolment will be offered firstly to those with a current sibling at the school and or kindergarten, and then via date order of the received enrolment form and payment of the non-refundable application fee. Refer to each entry level for further information (see below). Students from other Steiner Schools will receive special consideration.

5.1 Sibling Offers

To receive an offer of a place at Kindergarten or Foundation, based on a child having a sibling at the school, an enrolment form and application fee must be received by the end of Term 1 in the year prior to the proposed entry. Failure to register a student before this time, may result in the student not being offered a position at the Kindergarten or School. Entry at all other levels is dependent on a vacancy being available.

5.2 Admission to Playgroup

Available Playgroup places require the completion of a Playgroup Application Form, with no application fee or enrolment bond payable. Admission to Playgroup is separate to entry to the Kindergarten & School and participation does not provide priority or preference to a place at the School or Kindergarten.

5.3 Admission to Kindergarten

Admission to Kindergarten takes place in five stages;

1. Completion of an enrolment form and payment of a non-refundable application fee. This registers a child's name on the waiting list for the requested Kindergarten year. This takes place at any time from birth to kindergarten age.
2. In Term 2 of the year prior to Kindergarten commencement, first round invitations to attend a Kindergarten interview will be made to those with current siblings at the school who have submitted their enrolment form and paid the application fee, and then in date order of receipt of the enrolment form and application fee. All relevant enrolment documentation is required prior to the enrolment interview with the Kindergarten Teacher. Any additional educational support needs may be identified, and subsequent interviews/meetings arranged. See section 9. An interview with the Head of School and / or the Business Manager may also occur.
3. Further interviews may be made dependent on available places, during the remainder of the year.
4. It is expected that most offers of place will be made by the end of term 3 of the preceding year.
5. Acceptance of an offer of place must be confirmed in writing within 7 days of the offer.

6. Legislative Requirements for Kindergarten Admissions

All admissions to the Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten program must comply with the Department of Health & Human Services “No jab, no play” legislation. During the admissions and enrolment process, a valid immunisation status certificate must be available and compliant with this legislation. If later a child’s immunisation status does not comply, the kindergarten will retract the offer and the application fee & entry bond is forfeited. A child who is not fully immunised may be accepted for enrolment under the Government’s 16 week ‘grace period’ if they fall into one of the recognized categories.

For further information refer to; <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play>

7. Admission Information

7.1 Admission to the Foundation Year, previously known as prep

All Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten students receive a guaranteed offer of a foundation place. To receive an offer of a place in our school, based on enrolment in our kindergarten program, families must submit a school enrolment form by the end of Term 1 in the year prior to the student’s proposed entry. Failure to register a student before this time, may result in the student not being offered a position at the school. Acceptance of an offer of place is confirmed by the payment of the enrolment bond within 7 days of receipt of the invoice. There is no application fee payable when students are making the transition from Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten into our foundation program.

Admission to foundation takes place in five stages for those families who have not attended our Kindergarten program;

1. Completion of an enrolment form and payment of a non-refundable application fee. This registers a child’s name on the waiting list for the requested Foundation year. This takes place at any time from birth to school age.
2. In Term 2 of the year prior to school commencement, first round invitations to attend an interview will be made in date order of receipt of the enrolment form and payment of the application fee. All relevant enrolment documentation is required prior to the enrolment interview with the Foundation Teacher and the Head of School, providing an opportunity to get to know the child and for parents/guardians to learn more about the Steiner program. Any additional educational support needs may be identified, and subsequent interviews/meetings arranged. See section 9.
3. An offer of place will be made by the end of Term 3.
4. Acceptance of an offer of place is confirmed by the receipt of a fully completed enrolment application, all relevant documentation, and the payment of the enrolment bond.
5. A meeting with the School’s Business Manager will also be required prior to commencement or immediately post commencement.

7.2 Admission to Class 1 – 6

Admission to Classes 1- 6 takes place in four stages;

1. Completion of an enrolment form and payment of a non-refundable application fee.
2. If a vacancy exists for proposed entry during terms 1, 2 or 3, interviews with both the Head of School and Class Teacher will be held. Subsequent interviews/meetings will be held where additional educational support needs are identified.
3. Proposed entry for commencement during Term 4, will not proceed until waitlist enrolments for the following year have been contacted and offered earlier entry. If these offers are not accepted, an interview will be arranged.
4. Acceptance of an offer of place is confirmed by the receipt of a fully completed enrolment form and payment of the application fee, together with all relevant documentation as per the enrolment form and the payment of the enrolment bond.
5. A meeting with the School’s Business Manager will also be required prior to commencement or immediately post commencement.

8. Enrolment in School

8.1 Enrolment Consent

Enrolment to the school requires the written consent of both legal representative guardians of the student. This ensures and protects the rights of both parents. Where both signatures are not available, a declaration stating the circumstances of the non-signing parent or a copy of a current supporting court order must be provided to accompany the enrolment paperwork, as applicable. Refer to Attachment 1.

8.2 Enrolment paperwork

Enrolment is not complete until all enrolment paperwork is received by the Enrolments Co-Ordinator. This may include, but is not limited to, enrolment forms, birth certificate, Immunisation Status Certificate, copies of medical management plans, court orders, conveyance allowance & CSEF forms. Students are not permitted to commence at the school or enter the classroom until the enrolment process is complete. Refer to the current enrolment form for a full list of requirements.

8.3 Acceptance of Place

Acceptance of an offer of place is confirmed by the receipt of a fully completed enrolment form, payment of the application fee, all relevant documentation, and the payment of the enrolment bond within 7 days. The child is unable to commence until this has all been completed.

8.4 Commencement dates

8.4.1 During school term for immediate start students

An offer of place is made based on all relevant interviews taking place with the Head of School and the Class Teacher and when the start date will be within the current term.

8.4.2 For the following term or year

An offer of place is made based on all relevant interviews taking place with the Head of School and the Class Teacher and when the start date for the student will be at the commencement of the following term or term 1 of the following year.

8.5 Tuition Fees

The initial term's tuition fees payable are calculated on a pro rata basis for the weeks the student will attend. Refer to the school fees information for the current year.

9. Waiting List

Waitlists occur when the number of applications exceeds the number of available places. Prospective families are advised at the time of payment of the application fee if there is a waiting list for their required year level. Placement on our waiting list for Kindergarten, Foundation or any other school level requires the completion of the enrolment form and payment of the non-refundable application fee. When positions become available, they will be offered to children with current siblings at the school and then in enrolment form and fee receipt date order.

9.1 Removal from the waiting list

Removal from the waiting list occurs when an offer of place is made, but not accepted by the family or when availability of a place is communicated to the family in writing and a response is not received within 7 days. In these scenarios, the offer of place and application fee is forfeited.

9.2 Changing the waiting list year

On occasion, a family may opt to change the year required for entry to the school. For example, a Kindergarten place may no longer be required, but a Foundation place is still desired. Families can provide advice of this change in writing and the original date of the receipt of their enrolment form and application is retained on the new waiting list.

10. Financial information

10.1 Application Fees

All applications to attend the school and the kindergarten are subject to the payment of a non-refundable application fee. This fee covers the administrative costs associated with processing an enrolment application. It is not a guarantee of an offer of a place in the kindergarten or the school, but placement on our waiting lists will not occur until this fee is paid and the date of payment will be registered as the enrolment date which will affect family's position on the waiting list.

10.2 Enrolment Bond

When an offer of place is made, families confirm acceptance of the place via the payment of an enrolment bond. If the child does not commence at Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten, the enrolment bond is forfeited.

The enrolment bond is refundable when the child finishes school at the end of Year 6, or when one full term's written notice of withdrawal is given. If there are any outstanding fees, the enrolment bond will be credited to the account before any credit balance is refunded.

For re-enrolling students, a new enrolment bond is required, even if the previous bond was forfeited.

10.3 Tuition Fees

The school, kindergarten and playgroup charge tuition fees are published in advance and are available on the school's website. The fees policy outlines the Committee of Management's position on the collection of school and kindergarten fees, and sets out the process for fee retrieval.

When a student commences part way into a term, tuition fees payable are calculated on a pro-rata basis for the weeks the student will attend. Refer to the school fees information for the current year.

10.4 Early Childhood Facilities Financial Support

In years of low enrolment in the kindergarten, a small percentage of school tuition fees paid by families will be utilised to financially support the operation of the kindergarten. The committee of management is conscious of this cost to the school and is comfortable to support the kindergarten as a feeder to the school. This may also be applicable to the operational costs of playgroup.

10.5 Financial Commitment / Jointly and severally liable

As part of the enrolment process, families meet with the Business Manager to review all financial information associated with the enrolment and school attendance.

Both signatories to the enrolment form are liable for ongoing fee payments, irrespective of private maintenance and financial support arrangements. This ensures and protects the rights of both parents. Changes to percentage arrangements as agreed to with the enrolment form, must be submitted in writing to the Business Manager with both signatories on the letter.

10.6 Outstanding Debts

New enrolments are not confirmed for siblings whose families have an outstanding debt to the school and who are not on an approved payment plan. For example, kindergarten or school places cannot be offered to siblings when the family has an outstanding debt and no current payment plan in place.

10.7 Previous Debtors to the School

If a family has left the school with an outstanding debt, and subsequently seeks to re-enrol a child or children, a place will not be offered until the outstanding debt has been paid. The exception to this may be in cases of extreme financial hardship, where at the discretion of the Head of School, a written fee agreement may be arranged with the Business Manager.

11. Exit Interviews

All families intending to withdraw a student are offered a confidential exit interview with the Head of School or a delegated replacement, or a member of College of the families choice.

12. Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy

Term	Definition
Acceptable immunisation documentation	As defined by the <i>Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services</i> as acceptable evidence that a child is fully vaccinated for their age, or is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind their vaccinations; or has a medical reason not to be vaccinated; or has been assessed as being eligible for a 16-week grace period.
Application Fee	A payment to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application for a place in a program at the service.
Current Sibling	A brother or sister of the child (with at least one biological parent in common or legally adopted) irrespective of their place of residence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A stepbrother or sister of the child (where the spouse or de facto partner of the child's parent is not the child's parent), whose usual place of residence is the same as that of the child; or A child officially in care or foster care and living at the same place of residence with another child attending the school
Disability	A condition which: <p>is attributable to an intellectual, psychological/psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory, or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments;</p> <p>is permanent or likely to be permanent;</p> <p>may or may not be of a chronic or episodic nature; and results in: a substantially reduced capacity of a person for communication, social interaction, learning mobility; and the need for continuing support services</p>
Enrolled	Kindergarten is the main entry point for children commencing at the Ballarat Steiner School & Kindergarten. When all enrolment requirements have been met, children attending this service are automatically "enrolled" for foundation and continuing years, contingent upon a new school enrolment agreement signed by both parents/guardians, and in the absence of both parents, a signed declaration.
Enrolment Form	Background and medical information for the child. The form is placed on the child's enrolment record and is kept confidential by the service. It is a legal contract confirming the enrolment and parental/legal representative responsibilities.
Enrolment Bond	The enrolment bond is an interest free deposit of \$500 per student, up to a maximum of \$1000 per family, and is payable after an offer of place has been given for the student to join the school. The bond will be refunded on written request, when a student leaves the school, and the required notice of withdrawal has been given. This is subject to all financial commitments having been settled. If not claimed within 6 months of a student leaving, and the school having sent notifications out to the family, the bond will be transferred to the school building fund and deemed as a donation to the school.
Student Record	The collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (Regulations 160, 161, 162) including the enrolment form; details of any court orders; and immunisation documentation as specified in the <i>Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services</i> . This information is kept confidential by the school.
Fee	A charge for either tuition, application for enrolment, enrolment bond.

Legal representative guardian	(In relation to this policy) is a person who has lawful authority of the child as described on the Birth Certificate or as per Court Orders that alter this authority.
Waitlist	Where demand for a class exceeds available places a list of prospective families wishing for a place is created.

13. Dispute Resolution

Contentious or disputed matters are referred to the Head of School who maintains responsibility to ensure that this policy has been followed.

14. Declaration

Sample copy of Declaration required for all single signatory enrolments.

I, _____
 (Full name)
 Of, _____
 (Full residential address)

 (occupation)

do solemnly and sincerely declare that:-

In relation to my child _____ (insert Child's name)

- The second parent/legal guardian is unable to sign their consent to enrol my child at the Ballarat Steiner School & Kindergarten due to (Please provide a paragraph statement outlining why the second signature cannot be obtained, i.e., deceased, overseas)
- I declare that there are no court proceedings currently in practice that would alter my authority to make "long term" decisions in relation to my child.
- In the event of an objection to this enrolment being received by the school, the school will assess on an individual basis the child's continuation at the school, and they may be de-enrolled.
- In the event of a false declaration the school may consider de-enrolling the student.

I acknowledge that this declaration is true and correct, and I make it with the understanding and belief that a person who makes a false declaration is liable to the penalties of perjury.

Declared at _____ This _____ day of 20 _____

 (Signature of person making this declaration)

Before me,

.....
 Signature of Witness

.....
 Name of Witness