

# Enrolment Policy

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**Effective Date:** October 2014

**Date for review:** June 2017

## **Introduction:**

This policy is applicable to all families seeking to enrol their child/ren at Beechworth Montessori School.

## **Aims:**

Beechworth Montessori's enrolment capacity at Gilchrist Avenue site has been capped at 112 students across Prep to Grade 6. We recognise that demand for places in the school may in future exceed places available, and we wish to implement a strategy that provides more certainty about future enrolments to aid whole of school planning and is fair and transparent to families.

The Security Deposit is designed to confirm the 16 Prep enrolments each year from Beechworth Montessori's 4 year old kindergarten program in the primary school and retain those students until the completion of primary school. This has specific benefits for Cycle 2 and 3 classroom Directors, enabling them to operate their learning environment upon authentic Montessori principles. This is part of our organisation's strategic vision and promise to parents. Our objective for Cycles 2 and 3 is to have 90% of students having completed Montessori early years programs.

This policy is designed to ensure that the integrity of the Montessori philosophy is of paramount consideration when considering enrolling new students. The enrolment criteria will be taken into account for each individual application for enrolment. Enrolment is at the discretion of the Principal, Administration and Staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Fees and Transition Policy and Vision & Values booklet.

## **Definitions**

Tiny Tots – 0-3 yr old parent/toddler program

Transition – 2.5 yr – 5 year old orientation program

After Session Care – a care program for children aged from 3 years who are not yet enrolled in primary schooling

Cycle 1 – 3-6 yr old program

Cycle 2 – 6-9 yr old program

Cycle 3 – 9-12 yr old program

## **Criteria for Consideration of Enrolment**

Criteria for entry to BMS reflects the school's desire to ensure that families involved in the school have a commitment to Montessori education. The Principal is the primary contact person with regard to enrolment and places are offered based upon consultation with the Enrolment Officer and Directors. The decision with regard to whom places will be offered is based on consideration of the following criteria.

- The age of the child
- The child's readiness
- Siblings already enrolled
- Previous attendance at Beechworth Montessori in a program
- Previous attendance at other Montessori services
- Full payment of the security deposit
- Grade of the child
- Balance of the classes across the three year age range
- Children of staff members
- Fee payment history

- Availability of places (variable according to but not limited by the size of classrooms, furniture and equipment available, special needs children currently in room, availability of staff, licensing requirements as deemed by legislation/regulations)

When all factors are equal, the full payment of the Security Deposit determines priority. Where there is limited places with interest exceeding availability, the factors considered will be past enrolment in a Montessori program, or siblings enrolled in the school.

Where there are competing enrolments for limited places in the prep program, priority will be given to children currently enrolled in the funded kindergarten program.

Applications for enrolment from children with special needs may be addressed on a case by case basis and enrolment procedures may be modified if necessary at the discretion of the Principal in close consultation with staff and parents/guardians of the child.

Entry into the primary school programme of a child who has not completed the first cycle will be at the discretion of the Principal and the Classroom Director. If entry is granted it is usual to have a term's trial period. The vertical age structure of the classes is an integral part of the Montessori programme being provided by our school.

### **Membership**

Membership of each child is required prior to enrolment in the Cycle 1, 2 and 3 program.

### **Security Deposit for entry into Primary School programs**

To secure a place through to grade 6 the security deposit must be paid prior to commencement. Enrolment numbers are limited to 16 places per year level in the primary school. Exceptions to this maximum number may be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Class sizes are limited to a maximum of 24 students per class where possible.

### **Cycle 1 enrolment**

Entry into the Cycle 1 program requires the completion of the Transition program. Children must be members prior to entry into Cycle 1.

- Children entering in the first year of Cycle 1 will attend 2x3 or 3x3 hour sessions.
- Children attending 2x3 hours must attend for at least one term of 3x3 hours before moving into the funded kindergarten year.
- In the second year of the Cycle 1, 15 hours are offered; initial enrolment being attendance of 5x3 hour sessions. During the second year of Cycle 1, a combination of short and long days may be attended when the child has demonstrated the attributes for readiness for long day attendance as per the Transition Policy, room availability, security of place in the primary school, administrative factors including staffing and ratios, current enrolment considerations including student mix, boy/girl ratio, specialist programs and peer attendance.
- Additional sessions may be attended by children deemed ready in the first and second year of Cycle 1, at the discretion of Directors and Administration staff. Additional fees are applicable for these sessions.
- Prep children attend long days for 4 days in Term 1 and move to 5 days for the remainder of the year. Wednesday is the scheduled day off.
- The afternoon program in Cycle 1 is designed for enrichment of the program for school aged children through the delivery of the Montessori National Curriculum and specialist classes and will only be offered to those children ready and able to remain focused and productive the extended hours.

As per Montessori philosophy, children are encouraged to have commenced the process of independent toileting prior to entry into Cycle 1. Parents are to advise staff, upon enrolment, of their child's capabilities with regard to independent toileting. The Ruby Room and Cycle 1, 2 & 3 toilet facilities do not have approved regulatory nappy change facilities. Educators will work with families to support the child in toileting. If a child is not able to independently toilet, parents are requested to send children in a pant style, pull-up nappy that will support the child as they move towards independence in this area.

## **Immunisation**

It is a legal requirement that an immunisation status certificate be presented upon enrolment. Where a certificate cannot be presented, a conscientious objection must be submitted to the school. The Child History Statement is only valid as a school entry immunisation certificate if it contains the wording: "this child has received all vaccines required by 5 years of age" at the bottom of the statement. If the statement does not contain this line, it must not be accepted by a primary school, as the child's immunisation status/records are incomplete. The parent will need to receive further information with regard to immunisations or to obtain a school entry immunisation certificate from the local council instead. The valid Child History Statement that can act as a school entry immunisation certificate will be automatically posted out to parents from the Immunisation Register after their child has received the four-year-old immunisations and is fully immunised. This can then be presented to the school on enrolment to primary school.

## **Enrolment Procedure**

Enrolment is administered through Administration with the process being managed directly by the Enrolment Officer and Principal or delegate as indicated.

### **Process**

- Enrolment request received
- Parent/s & Principal interview and tour
- Observation by parents
- Application for Membership completed & membership fee paid
- Security deposit paid where a guaranteed place is required through to grade 6
- Child's last 3 reports supplied (if applicable)
- Child participation in the Transition program (2.5 yrs – 5 years)
- Director and parent meeting where applicable
- Student trial for entry into Primary school
- Offer of enrolment and session allocation where appropriate
- Student Information Record completed
- Immunisation certificate/dates
- Birth certificate sighted
- Fee Payment Agreement completed
- Formal letter of session allocation and orientation plan distributed to parents

## **Commencement**

The School adheres to the Montessori principle of staggered entry for children in Cycle 1 to enable maximum attention to be given to each new child in the class and to assist the children to adjust to their new environment. Commencement dates are determined by Administration upon consultation with the Cycle Directors. Cycle 2 & 3 children will commence as per an individual orientation plan as communicated by the Director of the classroom.

## **Transfers**

Once children have commenced in a class at the School they will not usually be transferred to another class. In the event that staff consider there to be exceptional circumstances regarding the need for a change, these may be considered at the discretion of the Principal, Enrolment Officer and Directors.

## **Children withdrawn prior to commencing in the Primary School**

Where the security deposit has been paid and the child is withdrawn prior to commencing in the primary school, the security deposit is forfeited.

## **Confidentiality and Privacy**

The School respects the privacy of the families and staff who make up the School community. It is the School's policy to ensure that all information obtained by the School in relation to personal circumstances of children and their families will be kept confidential unless:

- The family concerned authorises disclosure of the information; or
- The School is obliged to disclose the information pursuant to health regulations or other applicable laws.

**Relevant Legislation**

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)  
Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)  
Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)  
Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)  
Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cth)  
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

**Policy endorsement**

This policy has been duly reviewed and approved by staff and the Committee of Management as follows:

Draft policy presented to staff for review:	22 October 2014
Draft policy presented to CoM for review:	27 October 2014
Amended policy approved by staff:	
Amended policy endorsed by CoM:	J

This policy is endorsed by the following representatives:

Principal on behalf of staff:	Heather Gerrard
President of the CoM:	Seane Pieper
Policy effective from:	October 2014