

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CASTLEMAINE STEINER SCHOOL &amp; KINDERGATEN</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ENROLMENT APPLICATION AND ADMISSIONS POLICY</b></p>
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**25 August 2010**

**Disclaimer:** The Board of Directors reserves the right to amend this policy at any time, on the basis that any current applicants to the school would then be considered under the new and revised policy, or if required under transitional arrangements for a set period of time.

**Accountability:** Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Front Line Manager/Enrolment Officer in consultation with other members of the Enrolment Committee.

**Definitions:**

- “The school” refers to Kindergarten to Class 8
- “Early Childhood” refers to Playgroup, Ring a Rosie, Kindergarten and Prep

**1. Enrolment Committee**

The Enrolment Committee shall have three standing members:

- the Front Line Manager/Enrolment Officer (Convener and Chair)
- the Early Childhood Mandate Manager
- a Class Teacher (1-8)
- A quorum for meetings will be full membership.

This group must also consult with the relevant Class Teacher for any admission into an established class anywhere in the school.

Any disputes or contentious enrolment application or admission decisions must be referred to the Front Line Manager/Enrolment Officer who, in consultation with the Enrolment Committee, is responsible for resolving such disputes, with reference to this Policy and the Communication Policy. The Front Line Manager/Enrolment Officer is accountable through the School Facilitator to the Board of Directors.

**2. Handling Enquiries and Providing Information**

2.1 All enrolment enquiries will be handled by the administration / reception staff, who then inform the Enrolment Officer of the enquiry.

2.2 After the initial parent enquiry, the following **information pack** is forwarded by office staff:

2.2.1 A Parent Handbook which includes information on the philosophy of the Castlemaine Steiner School and Kindergarten, an overall picture of the school and curriculum and a summary of school rules and key educational policies. It includes information about Open Days with a strong recommendation to attend.

2.2.2 Information on the Enrolment Application Fees and Bonds payable prior to enrolment

2.2.3 Information on Current Fees for Early Childhood and/or school programs, including Music fees and estimates for camps and excursions from Class 3 upwards.

2.2.4 Enrolment Application Forms and Conditions of Admission forms for each child for whom an application is to be made.

2.3 If the parent wishes to **continue with the application**, administrative staff may offer to organize a school tour or refer the family to a coming OPEN DAY. The school tour, by a

member of either administrative or teaching staff, must be conducted according to the written information and policies of the school. Discussion during the tour will include:

- 2.3.1 Explanation of the Entry Age Policy. The cut-off date for Ring-a-Rosie, Kindergarten and Prep is 31 December.
- 2.3.2 An explanation of the school entry process, as included in the Information package.
- 2.3.3 A brief overview of the history of the school.
- 2.3.4 Information about school organization and community and parent participation will also be provided.
- 2.3.5 Information on the next available OPEN DAY.

2.4 Other general points about the Enrolment Application process:

- 2.4.1 Every enrolment application must be discussed fully by the Enrolment Officer with the relevant teacher before the parents or the child meet the teacher, by appointment, outside teaching hours.
- 2.4.2 Teachers are not required to meet or have phone contact with applicants who are on a class waiting list.
- 2.4.3 Only after an Enrolment Application and Enrolment Application Fee have been received and if there is a vacancy in the class will two observation days be arranged by the Enrolment Officer or delegate.
- 2.4.4 After the observation days, the parents will have a formal meeting with the Class Teacher and Business Manager to complete the enrolment application process.

### 3. Class Entry Age

3.1 Children are enrolled into a group according to their age by 31<sup>st</sup> December of that year.

- a) Ring-a-Rosie in the year they turn four.
- b) Kindergarten the year they turn five.
- c) Prep the year they turn six.
- d) Class 1 the year they turn seven.

3.2 The Teacher Development Manager (TDM) is responsible for determining any **variation to Class Entry Ages**. The Class Teacher may recommend to the TDM that children with a December birthday may be placed in the class of the following year for developmental reasons, only after a thorough assessment of the child by the relevant Class Teacher to ascertain the child's readiness to enter that class. Any such decision must be discussed with the parents in a fully minuted meeting. Class Teachers must consult with relevant colleagues in considering to vary the Class Entry Age Policy. The final responsibility for a variation of the Entry Age policy lies with the Teacher Development Manager.

#### 4. Enrolment Application Procedure for Entry into the School at Kindergarten Level

4.1 An enrolment application to the school must be on the correct form accompanied by the Enrolment Application Fee.

4.2 There are two categories of offer:

- a) **automatic offers:** This category of automatic entry is only valid at the initial offer of places prior to entry into Ring-a-Rosie;
  - Siblings of children currently attending the school who have been enrolled for two years or more and who have completed the enrolment application form and paid the enrolment application fee before places are offered;
  - Children of current class teachers.
  - Children of past students who attended Castlemaine Steiner School from Prep to Class 8 for three or more years.
- b) **non-automatic offers:** Are based on enrolment application date.
- c) Priority will be given to families who have indicated on their enrolment form that they intend to continue through the school, rather than those who indicate they are applying for the Kindergarten programme only.

4.3 Families with an old/previous debt to the school will be managed according to the Fee Retrieval policy.

4.4 Twenty one (21) places will be offered in the school at Ring-a-Rosie or Kindergarten level, and will be made by Term 4 of the year that the children turn three. (That is in the year prior to Ring a Rosie)

4.5 **A 22<sup>nd</sup> place** will also be offered at this time conditional on there being no child to join the group who needs a second year in Kindergarten and no child who needs a second year in Prep. This offer will be confirmed in Term 4 of the Kindergarten year.

4.6 A limited offer may be made to up to eight students for **Ring-a-Rosie and Kindergarten only**. These families are invited to have their child on the waiting list for Prep.

4.7 All offers of places will be made by the Enrolment Officer in writing and will include information about Kindergarten funding and Health Care Card subsidies.

4.8 **The Enrolment Application Fee**, as set by the Board of Directors, is applicable to all Ring-a-Rosie, Kindergarten, Prep and Class applications.

4.9 On receipt of the Enrolment Application Form and Fee the following will occur:

- a) The application date will be entered in full on the computerized data base, currently SchoolPro.

- b) A letter will be sent to the family acknowledging receipt of the application and fee and identifying the enrolment application date. The next steps of the application process will be specified.
- 4.10 When a family applies for a place for their baby by lodging an Enrolment Application Form and Fee, this is the Enrolment Application Date. The family need not attend Playgroup or Ring-a-Rosie but must indicate in writing their intention to take up a place in a Kindergarten group.
- 4.11 Attendance at Playgroup and Ring-a-Rosie does not influence selection into the school.
- 4.12 When a place in Prep is accepted, the family must pay an **Entry Bond**, as set by the Board of Directors, prior to the child starting at the school. This bond is automatically refunded when the child finishes at the school, either at the end of Year 8 or having given at least one term's notice, but will **not** be refunded if the child fails to commence in Prep.
- 4.13 The Entry Bond must be paid within 14 days of receipt of the offer of the place in Prep to confirm acceptance of the place. In cases of financial hardship the parent must contact the Business Manager who may agree for the Bond to be paid by installments.
- 4.14 **If the family does not take the place** when offered, the school will **not** hold a place open for that child. No holding fee for a proposed attendance in a future year or term will be accepted. This includes payment of an Entry Bond for a deferred place. If an Entry Bond is paid and a student does not subsequently start at the school, that bond will **not** be reimbursed. The place will then be offered to the next family on the waiting list.
- 4.15 The child is not required to attend Ring-a-Rosie to be offered a place in the school, but if the child does not attend Kindergarten, the offer of a place in the school will be withdrawn. This also applies to children in the automatic entry category.
- 4.16 If a place is not taken up when it is offered in writing by the school, the family may withdraw the application and have the student's name taken off all lists (with no refund of Enrolment Application Fee) or leave their name on the waiting list.
- 4.17 When a place is being offered, the Enrolment Officer must provide information to families on the **implications of refusing a place**, namely that the place may be offered to other applicants.
- 4.18 If an applicant cannot be contacted within two weeks, by all reasonable means of communication, the place will be offered to the next applicant on the list.

## 5. Enrolment Application Procedure for Entry into the School from Prep - Class 8

- 5.1 An Enrolment Application including the Enrolment Application Fee must be lodged.
- 5.2 The Enrolment Application Date is the date that this application fee is received.
- 5.3 A letter will be sent to the family acknowledging receipt of the Enrolment Application form and Fee, confirming enrolment application date and outlining the process to be followed.
- 5.4 The Enrolment Application Fee is set by the Board of Directors and is **non-refundable**.
- 5.5 Applicants from families who have a record of previous non-compliance with the Fee Retrieval policy require consultation with the Business Manager prior to the offer being made to ensure future compliance with the Fee Retrieval Policy.
- 5.6 Entry into Classes 7 and 8: Students will be assessed on their ability to benefit from the school's educational program.
- 5.7 In Class 8, applications for enrolment will only be accepted to commence in Term 1.
- 5.8 Applications for ongoing places in the school will be considered before those that are more short-term.
- 5.9 **Students returning after withdrawing** from the school may only do so following consultation with the relevant Class Teacher and the Teacher Development Manager. They will follow the same procedures as a new enrolment.

## 6. Admission Procedure when there is a vacancy in the class:

The procedure for a child **starting at the school when there is a vacancy** in the class is as follows:

- a) The applicant will
  - complete the Enrolment Application Form
  - Pay the Enrolment Application Fee
  - Be asked to attend the school for a minimum of two observation days.
- b) The class teacher will arrange an interview with parents/guardians within one week of the observation days – both parents (even if separated) will be asked to attend the interview.
- c) Teachers should refer to the *Teacher Notes for Enrolment Interviews* as a procedure to follow.
- d) Parents/guardians will be requested to bring anything which may help form a clear, full picture of the student's skill level, ie reports, workbooks etc. Parents will also share information about the child's developmental and health history.
- e) If a child has Anaphylaxis or Asthma, it is the responsibility of the parents to provide a medical plan to the school upon enrolment. Refer to the Anaphylaxis Policy and the First Aid Policy.

- f) The class teacher will ask for permission to contact the child's previous school.
- g) When a child is re-entering the school after having withdrawn, the formal interview process will occur with the class teacher and one other member of the College of Teachers for the family to re-enter the class community.
- h) The family must arrange an interview with the Business Manager to discuss their financial responsibilities. The Business Manager will follow the set procedure for these interviews and ensure that the Conditions of Admission form is signed by both parents.

**Offer and confirmation of a place:**

- i) At this point, the Class Teacher will ask the Enrolment Officer to offer a place in writing. The letter will specify the student's commencement date, include an acceptance form to be signed and returned by the parents and any medical management plan required for the child. Included with this letter will be an invoice for the fees and Entry Bond. The student may not start until this Entry Bond has been paid.
- j) The Enrolment Date is the date that the Entry Bond is paid and must be entered on SchoolPro by the Book-Keeper.

**7. Refusing an Enrolment Application**

The school reserves the right to refuse an enrolment application on documented educational grounds or because of failure of the family in the past to comply with or make a fee agreement. Communication with the parents on reasons for non-acceptance of an enrolment application must be in writing from the School Facilitator.

**8. If the Family Declines an Offer of a Place into the School**

If the family does not take the place when offered, the school will **not** hold a place open for that child. No holding fee for a proposed attendance in a future year or term will be accepted. This includes payment of an Entry Bond requesting a deferred place (see 4.13). If an Entry Bond is paid and a student does not subsequently start at the school within an agreed period, that bond will **not** be reimbursed. The place will then be offered to the next family on the waiting list. Any family who refuses a place will be informed in writing if that place will be offered to another applicant.

**9. Class / Group Sizes**

Playgroups	up to 5 x groups of ten families
Ring-a-Rosie	up to three groups of ten children
Kindergarten	22 children with ongoing places in Prep and up to 8 additional Kindergarten <b>only</b> places may be offered
Prep	22 children
Classes 1-8	25 students

9.1 A variation to these class sizes may be approved by the Board of Directors on recommendation from the College of Teachers.

9.2 The Board of Directors approves maximum class sizes, considering input from the College of Teachers and the Business Manager.

9.3 A class teacher may request to cap enrolments in their class according to special needs of the class, to allow them to consolidate and maintain a positive learning environment. Approval to limit class sizes must be given by the Teacher Development Mandate holder on recommendation from the College of Teachers and must be approved by the Board of Directors.

## **10. Over Enrolments**

The school does not accept over enrolments in classes except for a child of a current class teacher, who would be considered an automatic entry, to a maximum of one over enrolment per class. No other automatic entry applicants will result in an over-enrolment. Where there is an over-enrolment, if requested by a class teacher, the Teacher Development Manager may recommend that a Class Assistant, be provided, in consultation with the Business Manger on Budget implications and the School Facilitator on whole school or staffing implications.

## **11. Waiting List Management – Prep to Class 8**

11.1 If the number of applications in any class / group exceeds the number of places available, further applicants will be placed on a waiting list.

11.2 The Enrolment Officer, in consultation with the Enrolment Committee and the relevant Class Teacher, has the discretion to take all the following admissions criteria into consideration when offering a place in an established class or group when a vacancy occurs.

11.2.1 The applicant has siblings already at the Castlemaine Steiner School & Kindergarten for two or more years.

11.2.2 The applicant has attended Castlemaine Steiner School for 2 or more years and/or the Kindergarten for one full year.

11.2.3 The applicant has attended or is transferring from another Steiner school.

11.2.4 Date of application for enrolment.

11.3 Applicants will be assessed on the number of criteria fulfilled. Where this is equal, then date order will prevail.

11.4 The Enrolment Committee has the ability but not the requirements to invite a family to an interview in cases where the decision is not clear.

11.5 If the family refuses an offer of a place at the school, that place would be offered to another applicant, and the student's name will be withdrawn **unless** the family request in writing that the child's name remain on the waiting list.

11.6 All information concerning the progress of an application must be in writing.

## **12. Children with Special Needs**

The school will work within the parameters of the Equal Opportunity Act (State and Federal) the Disability Discrimination Act, the Disability Standards for Education (2005) and the school policy on Students with Special Needs when dealing with applications from children with special needs. See Appendix 1 for the Enrolment and Admission process.

## **13. Part Time Enrolments**

- 13.1 The school does not accept part-time enrolments unless for serious medical or formally recognized special educational needs of students.
- 13.2 The Assessment and Reporting Manager in consultation with the Enrolment Committee, the School Facilitator and the College of Teachers, may approve a part-time enrolment. This approval must be on educational or serious medical grounds, where the school is unable to meet the educational needs of the child on a full-time basis.
- 13.3 Approval for a part-time enrolment must be given in writing to the parents by the School Facilitator with a copy to the Enrolment Officer and the Business Manager.
- 13.4 Government funding and fees will be on a pro rata basis for approved part-time enrolments. Full cost will be charged for any camps and excursions that the student attends.
- 13.5 If a child is not given part-time status by the Assessment and Reporting Manager, and the parent/s / guardian/s still elect to keep the child at home for a proportion time on a regular basis, the school will still consider the child as full time and full time fees will be charged. Parents must understand, however, that the school is then unable to take responsibility for the child's education over less than five days per week. The school may make the decision to terminate the child's enrolment after appropriate consultation and 3 formal warnings to the family regarding non-attendance.

## **14. New Parent Orientation**

- 14.1 At the beginning of the school year, welcoming and orientation sessions will be held for parents. This will consist of an informal morning tea for Class One parents and other new parents, held after Assembly on the first day of the school year. This will be followed by an information session about Castlemaine Steiner School and Steiner education in general early in the Term.
- 14.2 Parent information sessions will held early in the first term and in third term and must be attended by at least one parent.
- 14.3 For parents joining the school later in the year, a mentoring / "cobber" system with another "older" family will be established. Class carers will be involved in this process.

DATE ENDORSED:

**25 August 2010**

SIGNED BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Pamela Oakley

SIGNED BY THE SCHOOL FACILITATOR:

D Wardle

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DATE TO BE NEXT REVISED:

Term 2 2012

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

1. If during the class teacher / parent interview it becomes apparent that the child has Special Education needs and will require additional educational support, further discussions, or another specific interview, will be held on the appropriate educational programme for the child, including what reasonable adjustments can be made by the school.
2. The parent must be informed, by the Class Teacher and School Facilitator in the Interview, of the limited funding allocation available to children with special needs in the Independent School system. (Currently this is between \$1,500 - \$3,600, through ISV funding applications, which are due in September each year). Medical or educational psychologists' reports are required as part of this application process to ISV.
3. Parents must be given a realistic picture of the school's current resources available for any special needs programme which may be offered by the school to children with disabilities. It must remain the choice of the parent to proceed or not with the enrolment application based on this information.
4. Further assessments of the educational needs of the child may be made in order to determine what adjustments to school programmes or facilities are necessary.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **BUSINESS MANAGER INTERVIEW WITH THE PARENT/S**

An interview with the Business Manager will be arranged to confirm the financial responsibilities of the family when commencing at Castlemaine Steiner School and Kindergarten.

At this meeting information will be provided on:

- a. Current Fees and Levies,
- b. Conveyance Allowance,
- c. Education Maintenance Allowance,
- d. Any other relevant financial information.
- e. A copy of a summary of the main points from the school's current Fee Retrieval policy (Flow chart)
- f. The community commitment expectations (eg. participation in Fundraising and Working Bees) should also be given to the parents at this meeting.
- g. Advice on the tax deductible funds in the school (Building and Library funds) should also be given, encouraging contributions to these funds. This information will be conveyed to groups of Early Childhood enrolments in writing in the information packs and in the school newsletter.

The Business Manager must ensure that the Conditions of Admission Form is signed by all parties responsible for payment of school fees at this meeting, as this specifies the legal responsibility the parent/s are taking for payment of fees and to support the school's policies. This applies to all families entering the school.