



ENROLMENT POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this enrolment policy is to ensure that the enrolment process for Wild Cherry School and Wild Cherry Kindergarten (henceforth referred to as the 'School') is clear, consistent, fair, and thorough for all applicants.

Initial enquiries are taken and responded to by admin staff. The enrolment interview will be conducted by the School Leader and relevant class teacher. If enrolment is to be pursued, it will be completed by admin staff.

Overview

Wild Cherry School was established in 2013 and presently offers playgroup, kindergarten and primary years P-6. The school supports the educational indications given by Rudolf Steiner. Wild Cherry School encompasses the essentials of Waldorf/Steiner education whilst incorporating the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework into learning, assessment, and reporting practices.

After the initial enquiry, parents receive an enrolment pack with the following information:

1. Enrolment Application Form with conditions of admission
2. Schedule of Fees
3. Current School Handbook
4. Brochures, which includes information on the philosophy of the School and an overall picture of the curriculum
5. Copies of relevant policies and procedures, e.g. enrolment policy, fee policy, fee assistance policy, dress code, child safe policy, etc.

If the parent/guardians wish to continue with the enrolment, admin staff will invite them to an upcoming open day or set up a tour of the school and a pre-enrolment conversation with the School Leader and relevant class teacher.

The pre-enrolment conversation includes:

1. A brief overview of the history of Wild Cherry School
2. The educational philosophy and the aims of Rudolf Steiner Education and those of the School
3. Information about the School's organisation and community and parent participation
4. Explanation of the enrolment process
5. Explanation of the Entry Age
6. Relevant policies and procedures
7. Any other relevant family and child specific information

Entry Age

Wild Cherry School aims to work within the holistic framework of age appropriateness suggested by Waldorf/Steiner education. The pedagogical ideals concerning age appropriateness and curriculum are best served if they remain mobile and plastic.

Children are enrolled into year level according to their date of birth. Wild Cherry School acknowledges that this is confronted by the realities of life and will accommodate accordingly. The School will consider the development of the incoming child, the proposed class with all the peculiarities of every pupil in it, the individuality of the teacher, and the educational laws prevailing where the School is located. All these factors may modify the ideal entry age and deserve discussion.

Children are enrolled in:

4yo Kindergarten – the year the child turns 5 by 31 December or 4 by 30 April of that calendar year

Prep – the year the child turns 6 by 31 December of that school year

Class 1 – the year the child turns 7

Class 2 – the year the child turns 8; and so forth

Any variations are to be discussed and approved by the School Leader and the class teacher concerned. An assessment may affect the class level and progression to formal primary learning particularly for children born later in the year, who may not be ready for Class 1 for example, or children who may be younger but are found to be ready for formal learning.

Eligibility

All children who are eligible to attend a Victorian school or early childhood service are welcome to apply for attendance.

Enrolment decisions will not be made based on race, religion, gender, or disability, unless this creates unjustifiable hardship for the School.

Priority enrolment group, if meeting all other enrolment criteria:

- i. A child that has attended Wild Cherry Kindergarten and transitions to Wild Cherry School (Prep)
- ii. The sibling of a child who is already enrolled
- iii. A child that has previously attended another Steiner school or kindergarten
- iv. Children or grandchildren of current staff members
- v. Children of previous students

No Jab, No Play Legislation

Children to be enrolled in early childhood services, e.g. Wild Cherry Kindergarten, are required to meet relevant legislation, e.g. *Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Act 2015*.

Enrolment in Wild Cherry Kindergarten is not confirmed until the parent/guardians of the child have provided an immunisation status certificate no older than two months immediately before the date that the child first attends the service indicating that the child is age appropriately immunised or meet the criteria for exemption.

A grace period of 16 weeks after the date on which the child first attends the service is available for families to provide the immunisation status certificate. The School will take reasonable steps to ensure such a certificate is provided.

Immunisation

An immunisation status certificate must be provided to the School when enrolling a child in P-6, even if the certificate shows that the child has not received any vaccinations. Immunisation status certificates are issued by the Australian Childhood Register (ACR). Families automatically receive this statement when the child turns 5 years old, but a certificate can be requested at any time.

The school will keep a copy of the certificate on file. If there is a disease outbreak, families of children on a catchup plan or unvaccinated children can be quickly identified and excluded from school until the risk of infection has passed.

If an immunisation status certificate is not provided to the School, a child may be excluded from attending school during a disease outbreak because their immunisation status is unknown. Note: also refer to No Jab, No Play on page 2 for children enrolled in early childhood services (kindergarten).

Homeopathic treatment is not a legally recognised form of immunisation and is not listed on an immunisation status certificate.

Application Process

All children enrolling at Wild Cherry School can expect a smooth transition that enables them to become part of school with a minimum of disruption and maximum support.

The School will provide an efficient process of enrolment that satisfies the needs of both families and the school.

1. The School will organise a school tour for prospective parents/guardians and their children and a conversation with the School Leader and respective class teacher to ensure clear understanding of expectations on both sides prior to enrolment.
2. A trial day or transition day may also be offered.
3. Upon receipt of completed application form, application data must be entered in full onto the computerised data base, and application fee processed.
4. The application date is the date that the application fee is received to accompany the application form.
5. Parent/guardians will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing.
6. If, after consultation with relevant staff, the School considers an enrolment unsuitable, parent/guardians will be promptly advised.
7. The School will only refuse an enrolment on documented educational grounds or in cases of unjustifiable hardship to the School. In such cases the School will explain its position in writing to the parent/ guardians.
8. If the offer of enrolment is accepted, additional enrolment information will be provided for completion by the parent/guardians.
9. If there is no vacancy, the applicant may request to be put on the waiting list until a place becomes available.
10. Families have 14 days from the date of the offer of enrolment to accept, otherwise the position may be offered to another family.

Enrolment Conversations

Enrolment conversations for families not in the automatic entry group, may be conducted by the School Leader and/or other relevant teaching staff.

The conversation will follow a set of questions to try to ascertain an overall picture of the child, the family and the class group they will be entering. Final decisions on places will reflect consideration of the whole picture.

- i. The degree of parental support for the child's education, health and wellbeing, and behaviour
- ii. The degree of support for and commitment to Waldorf/Steiner education
- iii. Siblings
- iv. Attendance at another Waldorf/Steiner School
- v. Fee payment capacity
- vi. The chronological position according to the application date on the waiting list. Note: This point will only be considered when all other factors are equal.

Exclusion of a Child

The School reserves the right to decline to offer enrolment to a child based on documented educational grounds or if the enrolment causes unjustifiable hardship to the School. Such exclusion will only be applied if it does not infringe upon the rights of a child or discriminate against a child for any reason.

Children with Significant Support Needs

The School works within the parameters of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. If during the parent conversation it becomes apparent that the child will require additional support, further discussions may be required on the appropriate educational program for the child, including what reasonable adjustments can be made by the School.

Parent/guardians are informed of the funding opportunities available to children with significant support needs in the independent school sector. Medical reports may be required as part of any application.

Parents/guardians are given a realistic picture of the School's current resources for any special needs program, which may be offered by the School to children with significant support needs.

Maintaining Enrolment

To maintain their children's enrolment parents/guardians are expected to follow the School ethos, code of conduct and general student expectations as set out on the School Handbook.

If the School believes that a mutuality beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation between the School and parent/guardians has broken down to the extent that it adversely impacts on that relationship, then the School Leader may request the removal of the child from the School.

Before any child is expelled permanently, it is understood that the child will have received as much support as possible in line with the School's ethos and its restorative justice practices. The School will provide the child and family, in an age appropriate manner, with details of the conduct pertaining to the situation and give them reasonable opportunity to respond.

Families must comply with attendance, early leaving and late arrival notification by calling the office by phone, text or email no later than school start of the day they are absent/late/leaving early. The school will record all messages. All unexplained absences followed up by office staff as per ministerial orders.

All families are required as per fee policy to enter a fee payment plan due to be signed at the start of enrolment and the start of each school year.

It is the parent/guardians' responsibility to inform the School of any change of address, telephone numbers or email as soon as a change occurs.

Withdrawal of students

A child may be withdrawn from the School once attendance has started. Notification must be provided in writing within the current notification period as stated in the fee policy. Fees may apply, if no such notification is received.

Enrolment Records

The School will ensure full completion of the enrolment form and the collection of essential information and maintain a regularly updated register of current enrolments as required by commonwealth and state legislation at the time of enrolment.

Records of enrolment are required for annual data returns to the Australian Government for the census of non-government schools under the *Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth.)* and to the Victorian Government for the Victorian census under the Victorian Government Funding Agreement for non-government schools and early childhood services.

Student enrolment records are retained for 7 years after end of school year in which the last entry was made. Records may be audited by either state or commonwealth authorities to monitor payments made based on student numbers or on the basis of the enrolment of particular categories of students.

Medical Attention

If a student requires medical attention that is beyond the scope of the School's first aid policy all attempts will be made to contact the parent/guardians in a timely manner. If communication with parent/guardians cannot be established timely and a child requires urgent medical treatment, the parent/guardians authorise the School to give authority for such treatment as part of the confidential child enrolment information. Parent/guardians indemnify the School, its employees and agents in respect of all costs and expenses arising directly out of such treatment.

Orientation for new families

Families are invited to a welcoming morning tea at the beginning of each school year.

Families joining the School later in the year will be welcomed into their child's class by the class carer.

The School holds regular all school meetings (about 3-4 times a year) and publishes a fortnightly newsletter.

The School Handbook provides much useful information for families and is a great guide to the Waldorf/Steiner school year.

The School encourages families to become involved in the school community through seasonal events and special interest groups.

AUTHORISATION

Board Secretary
East Gippsland Steiner Education Group Inc.
Date authorised: 19 February 2019

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 1) Enrolment Application Form
- 2) Confidential Child Information Form
- 3) Fee Policy
- 4) First Aid Policy
- 5) Pre-School Policies & Procedures
- 6) Schedule of Fees – Kindergarten
- 7) Schedule of Fees - School
- 8) School Handbook