



16 Clevedon Road, The Basin, Vic 3154  
PO Box 215, The Basin, Vic 3154  
P: 7038 6508  
ABN: 70617696894  
E: [info@fernbrook.com.au](mailto:info@fernbrook.com.au)  
W: [www.fernbrook.com.au](http://www.fernbrook.com.au)

# Enrolment Policy

## Introduction

Our mission at Fernbrook School is to create a dynamic, creative, and engaging learning place for all children. A place where they can feel connected and valued. We see ourselves as a dynamic and vibrant alternative to not only mainstream schools, but also to other independent schools.

We are guided by the belief that:

All children are unique individuals who learn in different ways and at their own pace.

All children benefit from holistic education (intellectual/emotional/social/physical).

All children learn best when they are happy and engaged.

All children have a right to be accepted for who they are.

At Fernbrook we:

- encourage play and exploration.
- foster and model strong relationships.
- encourage children's individuality and their strengths.
- promote creativity and problem solving.
- encourage children to be active participants in their learning.
- provide a cooperative and collaborative learning environment.
- recognise that children learn in context.
- provide for experiences and plan time for child led learning.
- teach in an ongoing cycle of planning and reflection.

## Selection

It is important that prospective families are aware of Fernbrook School's philosophy, values, and mission. When families appreciate and support these principles, the foundation is laid for a positive long-term relationship between their child/ren and the school.

Many factors are taken into consideration during the selection process. They include but are not limited to the following:

- The attitude of the child and their family towards our school philosophy and culture, and their willingness to support them.
- Current class numbers at the applicant's year level,
- Current class make up in relation to additional support needs,
- Resources available to cater for the needs of students,
- Challenges or needs within the current cohort.

All applications will be considered on an individual basis.

In relation to children with additional support needs, careful consideration must be given to the individual support required by the child and the school's capacity to meet those needs. The principal may request information from the child's kindergarten or previous school to help determine this.

Enrolments are not guaranteed, and the school reserves the right to refuse applications. The principal has discretion regarding all enrolment matters. Applicants may refer to the school's Complaints and Grievances Policy should they wish to appeal a decision.

If an application for enrolment is submitted but there is no vacancy in your child's year level, your application will be paused at this point but will be kept on file. If/when a vacancy becomes available, you will be contacted and asked if you are interested in continuing with your application. If so, your application will resume. Applications held on file awaiting a vacancy are not treated in a 'first come, first served' way. As stated above, many factors are taken into consideration when making decisions on enrolments with the aim of facilitating a positive long-term outcome for your child and the school.

Children previously enrolled at Fernbrook School who wish to re-enrol will be required to follow the enrolment process. As with all applications for enrolment, they will be considered following the selection criteria.

A family who has previously concluded their child's enrolment at the school because of dissatisfaction, would not usually be considered for re-enrolment.

Please be aware that part time enrolments are not offered at Fernbrook School.

### Considered criteria for placement in Prep

- Family's willingness to accept and support the philosophy, values, and practices of the school
- Demonstration of school readiness in the areas of:
  - Self-control, coping, and problem solving
  - Communication and sharing
  - Ability to co-operate and follow direction
- Whether the Fernbrook School approach will match the child's learning style
- Participation in the Fernbrook School transition program
- Age
- Siblings enrolled at the school/child of Fernbrook staff or director

## Considered criteria for placement in years 1 and above

- family's willingness to accept and support the philosophy, values, and practices of the school
- Whether the Fernbrook School approach will match the child's learning style
- Successful trial period (minimum 2 weeks)
- Siblings enrolled at the school/child of Fernbrook staff or director

## Priority Order of Enrolment

At the discretion of the school, offers of placement are given preference on the basis of criteria in the following order:

- Any child who is an immediate family member of a Fernbrook School employee or director.
- Any sibling of a child currently enrolled at Fernbrook School.
- Children who meet the considered criteria for placement.

## **Enrolment process**

The enrolment process is an important one as it gives new families and the school time to get to know each other. This gives everyone time to determine if the school will be a good fit for your child and whether or not it will be an advantage to their education. We also need to be sure that our philosophies and values align and that the school has the resources to provide the support your child needs. The school will work through the enrolment process in a timely manner, but rushed enrolments can lead to disappointing outcomes, so it is important to take the time it needs.

1. Contact the school to express your interest by calling the office on 7038 6508 or sending an email to [info@fernbrook.com.au](mailto:info@fernbrook.com.au). The Principal, Business Manager, or other school representative will call you back and, following a discussion, will invite you to attend a school tour.
2. Attend a school tour and take home an information pack. The school tour, the information pack and our website will help you to become familiar with our philosophy, values, and culture. Please take some time to consider this information to be sure that you agree with and will support the school's philosophy, values, and culture before continuing with the enrolment process. As an alternative school, we do things differently to other schools, so it is important that you come to see Fernbrook in action. Our model does not suit every child so visiting will give you a good idea as to whether our environment will suit your child or not.

3. If you feel that Fernbrook is the right school for your child, and you wish to apply for enrolment, fill out the Enrolment Application form which is included in your information pack and return it to the school office as soon as possible.
4. An invoice for your application fee will be issued once your application is received, and will be sent via email. Payment of the application fee must be received before your application is considered.

**Please note:**

If there are currently no vacancies in your child's year level, you will not be issued an invoice for an application fee at this time. Instead, your application will be held on file, and you will be notified if/when a vacancy becomes available. If you still wish to proceed with your application when we contact you, an invoice will be issued, and the application process will resume.

5. You and your child will be invited to attend an interview with the Principal and relevant classroom teacher. This gives everyone the opportunity to become more familiar with each other and to share more information. The Principal will be able to discuss your needs and expectations, enabling them to further assess your application and determine whether or not Fernbrook is a suitable option for your child.
6. After your interview, your application will be assessed, and the school will contact you to let you know the outcome of your application. There are three possible outcomes:
  - i. Your application is successful, pending the outcome of a compulsory trial period which is being offered to you at this time. A trial period is vital to ensure that Fernbrook is the right fit before a final offer is made. Trial periods typically run for two to four weeks depending on the individual. During the trial period the principal and/or your child's classroom teacher will be in frequent communication with you so that you are aware of how your child is finding their new environment. At any time, you or the school, can cease the trial. If your trial is positive, an offer of enrolment will be extended to you. (See point 7 for next steps)
  - ii. Your application for a Prep or Year 7 enrolment to commence in future years, has been successful and an offer of enrolment is being extended to you. Trial periods are generally not required for these situations, however, you will be invited, and expected to attend, our transition program which runs during term 4 of the year before you are due to start at Fernbrook. (See point 7 for next steps)
  - iii. Your application has not been successful. There are many reasons that can lead to this outcome. The principal will discuss the reason for this outcome with you.

7. If you have been extended an offer of enrolment, please follow the steps below:

**For enrolments starting immediately or next year:**

- *You will need to fill in/sign the following:*
  - Enrolment Form
  - Enrolment Agreement
  - Student Code of Conduct
  - Parent Code of Conduct
  - Digital Technology Code of Conduct
  
- *You will need to submit a Financial Commitment Plan to indicate the method and frequency of your school fee payments.*

*Note:* This is only for immediate start enrolments. If your enrolment is to start next year, this form will be emailed to you in term three. An invoice for school fees will follow in term four.

- *You will need to provide:*
  - a copy of your child's Birth Certificate for proof of age,
  - Immunisation History Statement.  
It is not mandatory for students to be fully vaccinated to enter school but, by law, an Immunisation History Statement must be provided to the school when enrolling a child, even if it shows that the child has not received any vaccinations.  
The school keeps a copy of the Immunisation History Statement so that, if there is a disease outbreak, unvaccinated children can be quickly identified and excluded from school until the risk of infection has passed.

All forms are included in your enrolment pack. To secure your placement, the completed forms must be returned, within 7 days of the offer being made. If you do not return them within the specified time, your place may be offered to another person on the waiting list. If completing any of these tasks poses a problem, please get in touch and we will do what we can to help.

**For enrolments starting beyond next year:**

In term one of the year before you commence your enrolment, you will be sent an enrolment pack. To secure your placement, the following must be completed and returned before the end of that term.

- *You will need to fill in/sign the following:*
  - Enrolment Form
  - Enrolment Agreement
  - Student Code of Conduct
  - Parent Code of Conduct
  - Digital Technology Code of Conduct

- *You will need to provide:*
  - a copy of your child's birth certificate for proof of age,
  - Immunisation History Statement.

It is not mandatory for students to be fully vaccinated to enter school but, by law, an Immunisation History Statement must be provided to the school when enrolling a child, even if it shows that the child has not received any vaccinations.

The school keeps a copy of the Immunisation History Statement so that, if there is a disease outbreak, unvaccinated children can be quickly identified and excluded from school until the risk of infection has passed.

If you do not return the forms and required documents by the end of term one of the year before you commence your enrolment, your place may be offered to another person on the waiting list.

*In term three of the year before you commence your enrolment, you will be sent a Financial Commitment Plan which you will need to fill in and return before the due date. An invoice for school fees will follow in term four.*

## **Fees**

When submitting an application to enrol at Fernbrook, a non-refundable application fee of \$150 (or \$250 per family) is required before your application is considered.

Your first payment of school fees must be made before your child's first day at school.

By proceeding with a new enrolment and continuing with an ongoing enrolment, parents/carers/legal guardians have entered into a contract with Fernbrook School and as such are legally bound to meet all fee obligations.

Please see our Fees Policy for more information regarding school fees.

## **Cancellation of Enrolment**

The decision for Fernbrook School to cancel an enrolment, is one that is not taken lightly, however, there are a number of reasons that may cause the school to make this decision. They include but are not limited to the following:

- If relevant information has not been disclosed or is inaccurate (see note below),
- A serious breach of the school codes of conduct,
- Serious misconduct,
- As a result of the implementation of the school's behaviour management policy,
- Non-payment of school fees.

If the school decides that an enrolment will be cancelled, you will only be liable for fees up to the date you were notified that the enrolment has been cancelled. Fees already paid beyond that date will be refunded less 10% to cover administration and other associated costs.

Note: Regarding non-disclosure of information or providing information that is inaccurate – Our main concern is being able to support all of the children at Fernbrook School; to provide a place where everyone is safe and given the opportunity to learn. If important information about a child is not disclosed, all children are at a disadvantage, especially the child who has additional needs. This is a position that is unsustainable and unfair to all involved. If information has been withheld or is found to be inaccurate, and we find that we are unable to offer the additional support that the child needs, the enrolment will be cancelled.

Once a child has commenced at Fernbrook School, their enrolment is continuous through to the highest year level that Fernbrook offers unless the child is formally withdrawn, or their enrolment is terminated by the school.

### **Related Policies**

Complaints and Grievances Policy

Fee policy

Parent code of conduct

Student code of conduct

Digital Technology code of conduct

Name of Document: Enrolment Policy

Document Number: FSPOL-ENR-000323

Approved by: School Board

Implemented by: The Principal

Last reviewed: March 2023

Next Review Date: March 2024