

Policy Library

This policy is current as of 9/2/2025 8:47:38 am, Australian Eastern Time. Please refer to the policy library website (<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2002-0006-01>) for the most up-to-date information.

Last updated
30/01/2025

Policy statement

- **Enrolment of students**

Implementation date
31/08/1997

Reference number
PD-2002-0006-01-V02.0.0

Publicly available
Yes

Policy cluster
School management

Enrolment in Kindergarten to Year 12 procedures

Direction and guidance on enrolling students in NSW public schools.

Audience

All NSW public schools.

[Changes since previous update](#)

Version	Date	Description of changes	Approved by
V02.0.0	30/01/2025	<p>Updated under the 2023 Policy and procedure review program including conversion into new template and improved readability.</p> <p>Changes to entitlement for temporary resident students to enrol in the local school.</p> <p>Changes to prioritisation of non-local enrolment criteria for siblings and children of staff.</p> <p>Principals authorised to waive 100-point residential check.</p> <p>Clarity on delegation to decline a local enrolment due to documented history of violence and time frames for processing enrolment applications.</p> <p>Clarity on document storage and disposal requirements.</p>	Secretary, NSW Department of Education

About the policy

Policy requirements

These procedures relate to the [Enrolment of students policy](#).

Definitions

Term	Definition
Child of compulsory school age	A child who is of or above the age of 6 years and below the minimum school leaving age. The minimum school leaving age is 17 years or when the child finishes Year 10 and meets the requirements of section 21B of the <i>Education Act 1990</i> .
Census school	School in which the child is enrolled.
DE International	The department's international unit. It manages international programs for all overseas students and temporary residents enrolling in a NSW Government school.

Term	Definition
Enrolment application form	Also referred to as 'Enrolment form'. They include blank, printed or downloaded forms, prefilled printed forms or online applications submitted through the department's online enrolment system.
Enrolment cap	<p>An enrolment cap for a school is established centrally based on available permanent accommodation. A school's enrolment cap may be varied or exceeded, in particular circumstances, for a specific period of time, to be determined by School Infrastructure NSW in consultation with the Public Schools Division.</p> <p>Demountable classrooms are not usually counted towards the enrolment cap unless new or replacement accommodation is under construction.</p> <p>In schools with support classes, the enrolment cap accounts for lower student-teacher ratios in disability and learning support classes.</p>
Enrolment panel	<p>A panel formed to assess enrolment applications. A panel is not required for non-local enrolment applications where demand for non-local places is below the local enrolment buffer. The panel includes a chairperson that is a member of the school's executive staff, as well as one or more teachers, and community members chosen by the school's parent organisation. The executive member or chair of the panel should be someone other than the principal so that the principal can consider appeals.</p> <p>Enrolment panels consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-local enrolment applications, where demand for non-local places is nearing, meets or exceeds the local enrolment buffer • adult enrolment applications • applications for specialist settings and programs in accordance with the specific setting or program assessment and placement procedures (see section 5.3)
Enrolment register	The electronic system that records the enrolments of all students at a school.
Enrolment return	Online submission of a school's enrolment data to the School Workforce directorate. It occurs each February and forms the basis for calculating schools' staffing entitlements and resource allocation.
Host school	The school a student attends for a specific time or purpose while enrolled at a census school.
Local enrolment buffer	<p>A portion of places set aside within a school's enrolment cap for local students' enrolment throughout the year. It is not separate or in addition to the enrolment cap. Each school's buffer size will differ based on historical data, enrolment fluctuations and the number of families moving into or out of the area.</p> <p>The size of the local enrolment buffer is set locally by the principal and approved by the Director, Educational Leadership. It is reviewed annually and set in time for assessing applications for the following year's enrolment intake.</p>

Term	Definition
Local intake area	Defined area that students must reside in to be eligible to enrol at the school.
Local school	The school that the child is entitled to enrol in, based on being eligible to attend the school and residing within that school's local intake area.
Parent	As defined by Education Act 1990 a guardian or other person having the custody or care of a child. Reference to "parent" throughout the procedures includes "parent and carer".
Sibling	Includes fostered siblings, adopted siblings, step-siblings, siblings as children of a de facto relationship and half-siblings.
Specialist settings	Education settings available to meet the strengths, interests and needs of students in NSW. This includes but is not limited to support classes, opportunity classes, selective high schools, specialist high schools (such as those specialising in creative and performing arts, sports, and technology) and schools for specific purposes.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents:

- are legally obliged to enrol their child of compulsory school age in a government school or registered non-government school, or to register for homeschooling
- when required by the school, provide accurate information and documentation necessary to allow the school to establish a child's entitlement to enrol and implement any risk assessments, management plans or learning and support plans.

Principals:

- assess all enrolment applications in line with section 2
 - accept a local enrolment, or recommend declining local enrolments by consulting with the Director, Educational Leadership
 - accept or decline non-local enrolment applications in line with section 4
- establish an enrolment panel to consider non-local applications where demand for non-local enrolment exceeds the number of available places below the local enrolment buffer
- ensure the school's non-local enrolment criteria are not unlawfully discriminatory
- consult with the Director, Educational Leadership where
 - it is recommended that a local enrolment should be declined
 - the applicants have declined to sign the consent to access documents or declaration of accuracy sections
 - attempts to gain information from previous schools or other agencies about the prospective student have been unsuccessful
- lead the implementation of this procedure in line with [anti-discrimination obligations](#) and [procedural fairness principles](#)
- maintain an electronic enrolment register with accurate enrolment data in line with record-keeping requirements
- share information relevant to school and student safety, welfare and wellbeing of students under 18 years of age with other principals when required under Chapter 16A of the [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#) and the department's [Child protection – responding to and reporting students at risk of harm](#) policy or where transfer of information is requested to enrol a child in another school
- arrange to seek relevant information about a student including information from non-government schools or schools outside NSW where relevant, oversee risk assessments, and consider additional adjustments for prospective students

with diverse learning and wellbeing needs, including cultural and language considerations, disability, developmental age, trauma, child protection, and individual needs and circumstances

- manage and record short-term attendance and shared enrolments in accordance with this procedure and the [Student attendance in NSW public schools procedures](#)
- determine and manage appeals for enrolment applications previously declined by panels, ensuring the principal was not involved in the decision-making process
- have delegated authority to grant exemptions from enrolment in accordance with the [Exemption from school procedures](#).

School counselling service and school learning support teams:

- where a student changes schools
 - seek relevant information from the previous school counselling service staff and follow the School Counselling Service Practice Guide's instructions
 - assess a student's information, identify their strengths, interests and needs and develop strategies to support them.

Directors, Educational Leadership:

- determine non-local enrolment appeals that have been declined and the principal cannot resolve because they have had prior involvement in the matter
- monitor implementation of enrolment caps and local enrolment buffer levels in consultation with School Infrastructure NSW
- assess and approve on the principal's decisions about enrolment applications where
 - the application is a non-local application, and the school's enrolment level is close to the local enrolment buffer
 - the application is for an adult and is for a course of study not leading to the HSC
- refer a recommendation to decline a local enrolment to their Executive Director
- have delegated authority to grant and cancel exemptions from enrolment in accordance with the [Exemption from school procedures](#).

Executive Directors, Public Schools:

- have the delegated authority to grant exemptions from enrolment in accordance with the [Exemption from school procedures](#)
- have the delegated authority to decline a local enrolment where a student has a documented history of violence and there is no evidence the student has learned appropriate skills to manage the violent behaviour.

Deputy Secretary, Public Schools:

- has the delegated authority to grant exemptions from enrolment in accordance with the [Exemption from school procedures](#).

Secretary:

- may direct a student to be enrolled in a specified school, in certain circumstances under section 26H of the Education Act 1990
- designates school local intake areas
- has authority to exempt students from attending certain classes under section 26 of the Education Act 1990
- has the delegated authority to grant exemptions from enrolment in accordance with the [Exemption from school procedures](#).

What needs to be done

[Public preschools](#), [schools for specific purposes \(staff only\)](#), [selective schools and opportunity classes](#), [support classes \(staff only\)](#), distance education (refer to [Enrolment in distance education procedures](#)), temporary residents and international student enrolments are subject to particular procedures, eligibility criteria and assessments in addition to these procedures.

1. Enrol a student (local enrolment)

1.1 Entitlement to enrol

All eligible compulsory school aged students are entitled to enrol in their local school, except:

- where a student is directed by the Secretary, Department of Education or approved delegate to enrol in a particular school or type of school due to an identified risk
- where the Minister refuses enrolment based on expulsion from a government school or other sufficient reason
- where the Executive Director has declined the application to enrol
- for international students seeking enrolment at a school that is at or above capacity.

1.2 Eligibility to enrol

Eligibility to enrol depends on factors including the type of school (for example, primary, secondary or schools for specific purposes), age and type of visa (see [Enrolment of temporary residents procedures](#) and [Overseas students, visitors and partnerships](#)), as outlined in this section.

1.2.1 Age requirements

The *Education Act 1990* mandates that all children must be in compulsory schooling by 6 years of age (unless exempted under the [Exemption from school procedures](#)).

A child may be enrolled if they turn 5 years on or before 31 July that year. Students identified as gifted, who turn 5 years after 31 July of the year of enrolment, may be enrolled per the [High potential and gifted education policy](#).

1.2.2 Temporary residents

Temporary residents (other than visitors or other short stay visas) are entitled to enrol in their in-area school based on their residential address.

Per the [Enrolment of temporary residents procedures](#), temporary residents must:

- apply to the Temporary Residents Program to enrol in a NSW Government school
- obtain an Authority to Enrol (ATE) which is a document issued by [DE International](#) for the school they intend to enrol in. An ATE confirms a student's eligibility to enrol and is required for enrolment in the Temporary Residents Program, International Students Program and Study Abroad
- notify DE international if they intend to change schools so an ATE can be issued for the new school.

1.2.3 International students

Per the [Overseas students, visitors and partnerships procedures](#), international students must:

- have a student visa issued by the Department of Home Affairs
- have an Authority to Enrol (ATE) which is a document issued by [DE International](#) to enrol. An ATE confirms a student's eligibility to enrol and is required for enrolment in the Temporary Residents Program, International Students Program and Study Abroad
- notify DE international if they intend to change schools so an ATE can be issued for the new school.

1.2.4 Exchange students

As outlined in the [Overseas students, visitors and partnerships procedures](#), principals make the decision to enrol international students and secondary exchange students in NSW public schools based on several factors, including the school's enrolment cap.

Registered Secondary Exchange Organisations need to apply to [DE International](#) for Acceptance Advice of Secondary Exchange Student (AASES) for each secondary exchange student.

If an exchange student is seeking to enrol in another school, Registered Secondary Exchange Organisations, must provide the receiving school with a completed AASES form and inform DE International before enrolment.

1.2.5 Siblings

Principals should support families to enrol all siblings at the same school, provided all siblings meet any eligibility criteria for that school.

This includes prioritising non-local enrolments from students with siblings when:

- a local intake area changes
- a family moves outside the local intake area for the school (refer to 4. Managing non-local enrolment).

1.2.6 Non-local enrolment for continuity in language education

For students who have previously studied a language in primary school for at least 4 years, special consideration may be granted during the transition to high school.

If the language offered at the high school aligns with the student's prior language studies in primary school, they may be eligible for out-of-area enrolment to continue their language education seamlessly.

1.2.7 Proof of address

Under the *Education Act 1990*, principals may require proof of address to establish a child or young person's entitlement to enrol in the local school.

Any requests for proof of address must be reasonable in the circumstances.

Principals may waive or vary the 100-point residential address check requirements, to meet the needs of the school community or where a parent can give good reasons why they cannot present documents. Circumstances where this may apply include but are not limited to:

- families of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background
- families from refugee backgrounds
- families who are newly arrived in Australia (in the past 2 years)
- families managing trauma, for example families experiencing domestic or family violence or homelessness
- children or young people in out-of-home-care.

Principals of schools that are near or above or (i.e. the number of non-local enrolment applications received exceeds the number of enrolment places available outside the local enrolment buffer) their buffer level should use the following 100-point Residential address check to determine the student's entitlement to enrol at the school. The residential address check does not need to be used for non-local enrolment applications.

Table 1: 100-point residential address check

Document showing the full name of the child's parent or carer	Points
1. Only one of (no additional points for additional documents)	40
1.1. Council rates notice	
1.2. Lease agreement through a registered real estate agent for a period of at least 6 months or rental board bond receipt	
1.3. Exchanged contract of sale with settlement to occur within the applicable school year	

Document showing the full name of the child's parent or carer	Points
2. Any of the following	20
2.1. Private rental agreement for a period of at least 6 months	
2.2. Centrelink payment statement showing home address	
2.3. Electoral roll statement	
3. Any of the following documents	15 each
3.1. Electricity or gas bill showing the service address*	
3.2. Water bill showing the service address*	
3.3. Telephone or internet bill showing the service address*	
3.4. Driver licence or government issued ID showing home address**	
3.5. Home building or home contents insurance showing the service address	
3.6. Motor vehicle registration or compulsory third party insurance policy showing home address	
3.7. Statutory declaration stating the child's residential address, how long they have lived there, and any supporting information or documentation of this	

* up to 3 months old

** that is current or has expired within the last 3 months.

Principals should manage any records and copies of records used to verify the identity of any individual in line with the [record-keeping requirements](#).

1.2.8 Exemption from enrolment

The following roles can grant an exemption in accordance with the [Exemption from school procedures](#):

- Secretary
- Deputy Secretary, Public Schools
- Executive Directors, Public Schools.

1.3 Supporting parents with enrolment

Parents can submit an [Application to enrol in a NSW Government school form \(PDF 930 KB\)](#) manually using a paper form or digitally through [Online Enrolment](#). School staff will provide reasonable support to enable parents to complete the enrolment form, particularly for parents from language backgrounds other than English, including those learning English as an additional language/dialect (EAL/D) and parents with cognitive or sensory disability. [Translated versions](#) of the Application to enrol in a NSW Government school form are available.

For more information, refer to [Translated documents](#), which also contain information on the telephone interpreter services. For technical support with online enrolment, parents can contact the Online Enrolment Service Desk using the [contact form](#) or by calling 1300 679 338.

1.4 Students in out of home care

The school may be notified by either the carer or case worker regarding the impending enrolment of a student in out of home care in their area (known as pre-enrolment). The school will be informed of the student's statutory care status, the agency with case management responsibility, the carers details and, if known, learning, behaviour and health support needs.

Enrolment forms for students in out of home care must be signed by the Department of Communities and Justice Manager Casework or the appropriate delegated officer from the case management agency, in line with the [Supporting students in statutory out-of-home care procedures](#).

Any new enrolment or change of enrolment for a child in out of home care should follow the processes as outlined in the Supporting students in statutory out-of-home care procedures.

2. Assess enrolment applications

Principals have range of responsibilities in assessing enrolment applications, as outlined below. There are a range of key contacts to support this, as noted in Table 2 in section 2.2 below.

2.1 Principal responsibilities in assessing enrolment applications

Principal responsibilities in assessing enrolment applications

Principals:

- ensure that all reasonable steps are taken when identifying potential risks
- have processes in place to gather information about any individual planning and additional support that is required for the student, including behaviour support planning or personalised learning and support, and consider additional adjustments for prospective students with diverse learning and wellbeing needs, including cultural and language considerations, disability, developmental age, trauma, child protection concerns, medical and individual needs and circumstances
- have processes in place to gather relevant information to assess potential risks arising from a student's previous behaviours or experiences, including engaging in or experiencing bullying behaviour, problematic and / or harmful sexualised behaviours and/or poor attendance
- should rely on advice and support from the Health, Safety and Staff Wellbeing directorate, Team around a School and where applicable, external agencies or experts
- supervise the development of a risk assessment using relevant information from:
 - the [enrolment application form](#) (paper or [online](#))
 - information transferred from other schools, in line with section [3. Share enrolment information](#)
 - organisations other than schools (for example, a health care professional working with the student)
 - court orders and other relevant documents provided on enrolment
 - speaking with school counsellors or psychologists where the student has a history of violence
- must identify considerations for accepting or not accepting enrolment applications and record these for all online enrolment applications in the Online Enrolment System
- seek advice from the Director, Educational Leadership in the following situations:
 - when applicants refuse to sign the consent to access documents or the declaration of accuracy sections
 - when attempts to obtain information from previous schools or other agencies about the applicant have been unsuccessful.

2.2 Key contacts for principals

Table 2 Key contacts for principals

Table 2 Key contacts for principals

Contact	Reason
Health and Safety directorate 1800 811 523	For advice when identifying any health and safety risks that may arise from a student's violent behaviour history.
Child Wellbeing Unit	For advice where any child protection concerns are identified, including instances where a student has engaged in problematic and / or harmful sexualised behaviours or been subjected to or otherwise affected by those behaviours.
Learning and support teacher	To discuss concerns about a student's wellbeing, such as prior bullying, to plan for the student's learning and support.
Team Around a School	To access a wide range of education support for schools, staff and students. The first point of contact is your local assistant principal learning and support or learning and wellbeing officer.
School Infrastructure NSW Asset Management Unit	For information or advice about your school's infrastructure including school upgrades, maintenance or capacity issues.

2.3 Requesting further information

Principals and school staff can request further information on students, if needed, on:

- identity, date of birth and address
- uncertain enrolment history.

Any requests for further information must be reasonable in the circumstances and should not create a barrier to enrolment at the school and should be in the best interests of the child.

2.3.1 Proof of identity, date of birth and/or home address

Principals and school staff can request:

- proof of a student's identity, date of birth, and home address. This can be in the form of documents or a statutory declaration, or both. The documents requested should be reasonably required to process the application
- multiple documents if they have reasonable doubts about the student's true residential address.

Legal issues bulletin 43, [Enrolment of students in government schools](#) provides further information on establishing a child's identity, date of birth and home address.

Principals should manage any records and copies of records used to verify the identity of any individual in line with the [record-keeping requirements](#).

2.3.2 Students with uncertain enrolment history

Additional enquiries may be necessary, particularly for students with unclear enrolment backgrounds or records unavailable due to absence or overseas travel.

Principals should liaise with the Director, Educational Leadership and/or Health, Safety and Staff Wellbeing directorate on 1800 811 523.

2.4 Assessing safety or wellbeing concerns

The duty of care and work health and safety law requires the department to do what it reasonably can to ensure the safety of students and staff. This obligation is met by:

- assessing identified risks
- identifying and implementing strategies to eliminate or minimise those risks
- providing individuals with necessary and reasonable support.

Principals should take what steps they reasonably can in undertaking this task and can rely on advice and support from the Director, Educational Leadership, Health Safety and Staff Wellbeing directorate, Delivery Support and, where applicable, external agencies or experts.

A template is available to support risk assessment (refer to [Student-tailored risk management plan \(staff only\) \(DOCX 356 KB\)](#)).

2.5 Timeframe for assessing enrolment applications

Applications for the current school year should be assessed within 15 school days. This timeframe does not apply to applications received for the next school year.

2.6 Certifying the enrolment form

The principal must sign the certification on [Application to enrol in a NSW Government school form \(PDF 930 KB\)](#) or certify online using the Principal Enrolment Interface within Online Enrolment.

Other staff members may assist in completing the certification but cannot sign.

The certification confirms that the necessary procedures were followed, including assessment of safety and wellbeing concerns and a risk assessment for potential risk applicants.

This certification does not guarantee the accuracy of the information on the enrolment applications or that no student with a history of violence has been enrolled.

2.7 Refusing enrolment

Executive Director, Public Schools:

- has the right to refuse enrolment of a student with a history of violent behaviour if there are no viable strategies or adjustments that can be made to manage the risk
- must conduct a risk assessment per the [Guidelines for the Management of Health and Safety Risks Posed to Schools by a Student's Violent Behaviour \(staff only\) \(PDF 748 KB\)](#) before refusing enrolment.

The Secretary or approved delegate can direct a student's enrolment at a particular school deemed appropriate for the student's needs.

Refusal of enrolment at a particular school does not mean refusal of enrolment in any NSW public school or facility.

2.8 Identifying and implementing adequate safeguards and supports

Where concerns exist about prospective students, principals:

- make reasonable attempts to ensure that appropriate safeguards and support systems are in place before making their decision on the enrolment application
- use the [Guidelines for the Management of Health and Safety Risks Posed to Schools by a Student's Violent Behaviour \(staff only\) \(PDF 748 KB\)](#) to identify and implement appropriate safeguards when dealing with potentially violent behaviour from students.

3. Share enrolment information

Enrolment information should be requested, transferred, and shared per legal requirements to assist with the enrolment needs of the student. Legal Services provides further information and resources to support sharing of enrolment information on [Child protection – sharing information \(staff only\)](#).

It is essential to share enrolment information as soon as possible after a student applies to enrol in another school to ensure they receive the appropriate and timely support they need. This may include conducting a risk assessment if necessary.

The [Student Information Request Form \(DOCX 318 KB\)](#), may be used to request information from the student's previous school.

3.1 Planning support for newly enrolled students

Students enrolling in a new school outside of normal enrolment periods (other than when a student enrolls in Kindergarten or when moving from Year 6 to Year 7) may have additional support needs. Principals must seek relevant information from the previous school and provide the information obtained to the school counselling service staff and learning and support team. The student's parent may be asked to provide further information or documentation and should be informed about any support strategies identified for the student.

School counselling service staff responsibilities

School counselling service staff:

- obtain relevant information from the previous school counselling service staff and take the action identified in the School Counselling Service Practice Guide.
- should refer to section 2.1.2 of the School Counselling Service Practice Guide for guidance on enrolling students with a history of violence
- may help determine the appropriate year and level of study for the student.

The learning and support team should assess student needs and develop appropriate student support strategies.

3.2 Transferring enrolment information between NSW public schools

Parents:

- consent to transfer enrolment information between NSW public schools on the enrolment application form
- update information on the enrolment application form when the student changes schools.

Principals and school staff:

- can share information between NSW public schools under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998. Information can also be shared under the provisions of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002. These Acts allow for transferring information about a student between public schools where it is lawfully authorised or required under an Act (such as the Work Health and Safety Act 2011) or any other law, including the duty of care or work, health and safety law
- share information per the department's [Privacy Code of Practice \(PDF 361 KB\)](#), including where it is necessary for promoting and maintaining a disciplined learning environment.

3.3 Transferring enrolment information from non-government schools

When a student from a non-government school is enrolling in a NSW public school, there are 4 ways information can be shared:

- parents can provide consent for information sharing, or students 18 and over can consent
- chapter 16A of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, and the department's [Child protection—responding to and reporting students at risk of harm](#) policy require schools to provide information relevant to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students under 18 years of age
- part 5A of the Education Act 1990 requires schools to provide information relevant to assessing and managing health and safety risks from students with histories of violent behaviour of any age
- where an exception to relevant privacy legislation applies, such as a medical or other emergency or where a court orders disclosure.

3.4 Transferring enrolment information to or from schools outside NSW

Parents must give consent before student information is transferred to schools outside NSW.

Principals and school staff:

- transfer enrolment information as per the requirements of the [Interstate Student Data Transfer Note](#)
- can request student information from the previous school for students transferring from New Zealand.

3.5 Transferring enrolment information from a NSW public preschool or early intervention class

Parents:

- must submit an enrolment application form, even if their child attended a public preschool or early intervention class. Enrolment in a public preschool or early intervention class located at a NSW public school does not guarantee enrolment at that school
- must consent for preschools to share student information and documentation between NSW public schools as per section 3.2 above.

3.6 Transferring enrolment information from a non-NSW public preschool

Principals and school staff:

- note that early childhood education and care (ECEC) services external to the department are a prescribed body for the purposes of Chapter 16A of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, and are required to provide and receive information relevant to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students under 18 years of age.

Parents:

- must submit an enrolment application form
- must consent for a non-NSW public preschool
 - in a non-government school to share student information and documentation from that non-government school to a public school as per section 3.3 above. Noting that information sharing under Part 5A of the *Education Act 1990* is not available
 - in an early childhood education and care (ECEC) service to share student information and documentation from that ECEC service to a public school by means of the [Transition to School Digital Statement](#).

4. Manage non-local enrolment

All schools must consider non-local enrolment applications against the criteria outlined in this section.

4.1 Submitting a non-local enrolment application

Parents must submit a non-local enrolment application. These can be submitted manually through the [Application to enrol in a non-local NSW Government school form \(PDF 286 KB\)](#) or digitally through the [Online Enrolment for NSW Government schools](#) application form.

If a parent cannot submit the application digitally through Online Enrolment, the principal must provide a paper non-local application form that requires the applicant to address the selection criteria and provide supporting documentation.

4.2 Notifying the local school about a non-local enrolment

When the school's enrolments are close to the local enrolment buffer, principals:

- must notify the principal of the child or young person's local school before considering their non-local enrolment application
- must seek approval from the Director, Educational Leadership before offering a place.

4.3 Determining how many non-local applications a school can accommodate

A school's current enrolment cap (including any approved variations or temporary increases) determines how many non-local enrolment applications a school can accommodate.

If a school's current enrolments are **below** the school's enrolment cap:

- a school should accept non-local enrolments until it reaches its enrolment buffer (see section 2.7 for examples of where an application may be declined)
- if the school is approaching its enrolment buffer, non-local enrolments must be considered and prioritised against the criteria outlined in section 4.4 below.

If a school's current enrolments are **over** the school's enrolment cap:

- non-local enrolments must be considered and prioritised against the criteria outlined in section 4.4 below
- a school should consult with the Director, Educational Leadership and School Infrastructure NSW to ensure non-local enrolments based on criteria prioritised in section 4.4 can be accommodated.

4.4 Non-local enrolment criteria

Equity and excellence are key to public education. Parents may enrol their child at any government school if the child is eligible to attend and the school can accommodate the child.

Except for enrolments at the commencement of the school year, schools that have not reached their local enrolment buffer level should only accommodate non-local enrolments into classes with available places.

Where demand for non-local enrolment exceeds the number of available places below the local enrolment buffer, enrolment applications must be considered and prioritised against the criteria outlined below.

Non-local enrolment criteria

Principals must provide easily accessible information about the school's non-local enrolment criteria, available courses or programs to help students and parents make informed choices (for example, through the school website and/or printed materials available at the school).

The same criteria must be applied to non-local enrolment applications considered by the school, including expressions of interest for the Year 6 to Year 7 transition.

Non-local enrolment criteria must include, and these applications given priority:

- to ensure that students with additional needs have access to high-quality public education, students with learning and wellbeing needs requiring reasonable adjustments and/or additional educational support, including cultural considerations, disability, developmental age, trauma, child protection concerns, medical and individual needs and circumstances
- sibling currently attending the school, with siblings of students in support units given priority

Non-local enrolment criteria should include, and these applications given consideration:

- parent or carer works at the school*.

*includes all permanent and part-time department staff employed at the school including classroom teachers, the school counselling service, school administration and support staff, Home School Liaison Officers, staff that work at a public preschool attached to the school and school leaders. Temporary teachers who have been employed at a school for at least 12-months in the last 2-years are also included (temporary teachers employed for less than this time can also be considered at a school's discretion). This consideration will not be extended to casual employees or contractors.

Optional criteria:

- proximity and access to the school

- structure and organisation of the school (examples could include alternative school hours, compressed days, agriculture, sporting and/or music programs)
- access to single sex education
- safety and supervision of the student before and after school
- availability of subjects or combinations of subjects
- recent changes in the local intake area boundaries
- school is under buffer or cap and has capacity
- other considerations.

For specialist settings only:

- student ability, performance or achievement in the school's specialisation, for example, having sporting ability.

4.5 Assessing non-local enrolment applications

Where demand for non-local enrolment is below the local enrolment buffer, the school **does not** need to establish an enrolment panel to assess non-local applications.

Where demand for non-local enrolment exceeds the number of available places below the local enrolment buffer, or the school is over its enrolment cap, principals:

- establish an enrolment panel for non-local enrolment applications
- should inform applicants that the panel includes a community member chosen by the school's parent organisation and the information in the enrolment application will be disclosed to that member
- must inform parents of the application decision and provide a written explanation on request.

Enrolment panel responsibilities

The enrolment panel:

- must confirm they have no conflict of interest when reviewing the application/s
- must only assess information and supporting documentation provided on the application
- must record all decisions, keep meeting minutes and make them available to the principal and Director, Educational Leadership
- must apply the established criteria equitably to all applicants.

4.6 Recording reasons for accepting or declining non-local enrolment applications

Principals must:

- identify the primary reason, and any secondary or tertiary reasons, for accepting or declining a non-local enrolment application submitted through the Online Enrolment System
- record these in the Online Enrolment System.

4.7 Creating a waiting list for non-local students

The enrolment panel:

- can create a waiting list of students who were not offered a place, which will be valid for the current year only
- informs parents in writing if their child is on a waiting list and what their position is
- ensures that the waiting list length reflects realistic expectations regarding potential vacancies.

4.8 Appealing decisions on non-local enrolments

Parents can lodge an appeal if their non-local enrolment application was unsuccessful.

An appeal aims to determine whether the criteria have been applied equitably. If the principal was:

- not on the enrolment panel, they will review the appeal
- on the panel, the Director, Educational Leadership will review the appeal.

Principal and school staff responsibilities

Principals and school staff should:

- help students and parents who wish to appeal to understand their rights and the appeal process, and use an interpreter to provide information if required
- ensure that the person appealing has access to the appeal process and provide or arrange any necessary assistance, such as an interpreter, to help them write their appeal
- avoid involvement in the decision-making process or any appearance of such involvement by following the principles of procedural fairness
- inform the parent in writing of the decision about the appeal.

If the issue remains unresolved at the school level, the Director, Educational Leadership is the final level of appeal and must make the final decision.

5. Manage short-term attendance and shared enrolments

5.1 Short-term attendance

Students can only be enrolled in one school (the census school) at any given time. However, a student enrolled at one public school may need to attend another public school (the host school) for a short period of time.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- when parents visit a locality briefly
- the student participates in an integration program
- where parents disagree about enrolment (refer to the [Family law guidelines](#)).

Short-term attendance can only be used in unavoidable situations, not as a preference or choice, for example travel or holidays. It is generally not granted for more than 10 school weeks.

Students are considered short-term attendees in the following cases and do not have to enrol at the host school:

- if they attend for a period of less than one term
- if the placement is less than 2.5 days per week.

Refer to the [Student attendance in NSW public schools procedures](#) for further guidance.

5.2 Sharing information about short-term attendance

Student information must be shared according to these procedures (refer to [3. Share enrolment information](#)), even though the student is only a short-term attendee and is not being officially enrolled.

Census school and host school principal responsibilities

The principal at the student's census school must:

- consult with the host school about the student's learning requirements and progress and any other relevant information such as risk management and/or health care requirements
- receive the completed [Special Circumstance Register \(staff only\) \(154 KB\)](#) from the host school and add the information to the attendance records for the student.

The principal at the host school must:

- complete a [Special Circumstance Register \(staff only\) \(154 KB\)](#) for the student's attendance and forward it to the student's enrolled school (census school) at the end of each week for inclusion in the roll
- gather the necessary information from the student's enrolled school to determine if a risk assessment is required. The objective of the risk assessment should be to maintain a safe learning environment for staff and students.

5.3 Attendance in unique school settings and programs

Students can attend a specialist education setting or program separate to their census school on a sessional or full-time basis. Examples include tutorial centre and programs, support classes, behaviour schools for students in Emotional Disturbance (ED) and Behaviour Disorder (BD) classes, schools in youth justice centres, hospital schools, and distance education.

Students requiring intensive support may be enrolled at a SSP as their census school. Enrolment is subject to an initial assessment and placement panel procedures.

For information on how to record students with a shared enrolment or attending specialist programs, see sections 3.1 and 3.6 of the [Student attendance in NSW public schools procedures](#).

6. Manage adult enrolments

There is no legal entitlement under the *Education Act 1990* for adults to be enrolled in school.

Principals can accept adult enrolments, typically when the student is studying for the HSC.

An adult may be enrolled in a NSW Government school to complete Stage 6 schooling if there are no alternative options for adult education are available.

A person employed in the NSW Teaching Service may not be enrolled as a student.

Applications to enter study at an educational training unit in a Youth Justice Centre may be subject to different requirements.

6.1 Submitting an adult enrolment application

The adult applicant must submit an [Application to enrol in a NSW Government school form \(PDF 930 KB\)](#), along with the following documents:

- proof of age and identity, including any previous names
- contact details for two character referees
- a statement declaring no previous behaviour indicating a safety risk to others in the school environment and an Office of the Children's Guardian, [Working with Children Check](#) clearance
- evidence of current or recent studies, where applicable.

Principals should manage any records and copies of records used to verify the identity of any individual in line with the [record-keeping requirements](#).

6.2 Determining adult enrolment applications with an enrolment panel

Principals must establish an enrolment panel to interview the applicant, contact referees, and consider the application and associated documentation.

The enrolment panel:

- explains the nature of the school programs, rules and culture to the applicant
- establishes the applicant's willingness to comply with school policies and procedures
- discusses support needs, such as a mentor, regular progress monitoring or assistance from the school counsellor/psychologist or other learning support staff
- considers the applicant's interview, working with children check clearance, referee reports, any relevant information from government agencies, health professionals or other relevant bodies about potential risks to health and safety in the school
- requests alternate referees if the assigned referees are deemed unsuitable
- if applicable, requests the applicant's permission to access information from government agencies, health professionals or other relevant entities

- will inform the applicant that a support person may accompany them if required
- assesses the applicant's suitability based on the following criteria:
 - available alternatives
 - commitment to education
 - academic readiness
 - capacity to integrate successfully in school
 - any risk they may pose to safety
 - child protection issues.

6.3 Setting conditions for adult enrolment

Principals can set conditions for enrolment, which may include an agreement between the principal and the student. Principals should seek advice from Legal Services before providing and entering into an agreement.

These conditions may include:

- the student's expectations
- the support the school will provide to the student
- the dates for review
- a process for resolving any disagreements
- a termination clause.

6.4 Communicating the application outcome

The principal or delegate must provide the applicant with written notice of the determination.

If an applicant is unsuccessful, the following information should be included:

- reasons for declining the application
- alternative education options, including TAFE NSW
- contact numbers for relevant advice and support
- availability of an appeal of the determination, made in writing to the principal.

6.5 Terminating adult enrolment

Principals have the right to terminate the enrolment of an adult on the following specific grounds:

- lack of commitment to education
- lack of academic readiness
- demonstrated incapacity to integrate successfully
- demonstrated a risk to the welfare, health or safety of staff or students, including the adult student
- proof that documentation submitted as part of the application to enrol was false or misleading
- non-compliance with conditions of enrolment.

The principal must apply the principles of [procedural fairness](#) if terminating the adult enrolment. This termination must be agreed to by the principal and adult student in writing.

6.6 Adult enrolment for a course of study other than a Higher School Certificate

In exceptional circumstances, an adult may be enrolled in a course of study at a NSW Government school that does not lead to the HSC. Remote rural areas where a government school is the only available education facility are considered exceptional circumstances. If endorsed by the Director, Educational Leadership, the principal may accept the enrolment application.

Record-keeping requirements

Managing enrolment data

Maintaining enrolment data

Enrolment data about each enrolled student is recorded to comply with legislation for administrative purposes and resourcing, accountability, and reporting requirements.

The principal maintains an electronic enrolment register provided by the department that contains the following student information:

- name, date of birth and address
- name and contact telephone number of parent(s)
- date of enrolment
- leaving date and destination (where applicable)
- previous school (where applicable)
- any other information as required by the department or Minister.

Enrolment information provides data for resourcing of specific programs, legislative requirements, obtaining Commonwealth funding and national reporting. It includes age or grade, language other than English spoken at home, English language proficiency, disability, visa category and subclass, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data.

The enrolment register is kept for State Archives.

Enrolment return

Principals must ensure that the enrolment information on the return is complete and supported by proper documentation to meet audit requirements.

Principals are responsible for verifying the accuracy of the school enrolment return. They must include the following information in the return:

- students present on the day the return was completed
- students who, although absent on the day the return was completed, have had some attendance in the current year and have not informed the school of their departure
- students, although absent on the day, whose parents provided the school with written advice or where the schools has a formal record of the parent interview stating that the student will return before Term 1 ends.

Privacy

School staff must comply with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW) and the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* while processing applications for enrolment and associated purposes. The information the applicants provide must be securely stored and used only for the intended purposes.

Document storage

Other than the enrolment form itself, where this has not been submitted through the Online Enrolment System, schools should not keep copies of documents provided to the school used to verify the identity of any individual for the purposes of enrolment. Examples include:

- primary documents such as a birth certificate, passport, or citizenship certificate
- secondary documents such as Medicare cards
- documents used to provide proof of address in section 1.2.7
- a statutory declaration providing proof of a student's identity, date of birth, and/or home address.

School staff should sight original or certified copies of original identification documents for the purpose of verifying a student's identity and eligibility to enrol. A written or electronic record confirming the documents have been sighted is sufficient for record keeping purposes.

Refer to optional supporting document, [Guide for retention and storage of enrolment documents \(PDF 121 KB\)](#) and [Enrolment Document Verification Checklist template for schools \(DOCX 26 KB\)](#).

Privacy retention and disposal requirements

Schools must note the requirements for collecting, using, disclosing and storing personal and health information as outlined in the enrolment application form.

School staff should:

- retain the original document used to verify the identity of any individual until the verification and validation process is complete, then return the original document to the owner
- retain any copy of a document used to verify the identity of any individual until the verification and validation process is complete, then destroy the copy.

School staff will comply with records retention and disposal requirements under 3.0.4 and 3.0.5 of the [Retention and disposal requirement for schools](#).

Mandatory tools and templates

- [Online enrolment for NSW Government schools](#)
- [Application to enrol in a NSW Government school form \(PDF 930 KB\)](#) – downloadable paper form and [translated forms](#) if required
- [Special Circumstance Register \(staff only\) \(PDF 154 KB\)](#)

Supporting tools, resources and related information

Supporting tools and resources

- Information on enrolling in a NSW public school – [Enrolment](#)
- [Enrolment in public preschools procedures](#)
- [Application to enrol in a non-local NSW Government school form \(PDF 286 KB\)](#)
- Information on [Early intervention](#) classes
- Information on Year 6 to Year 7 transition – [High school enrolment](#)
- [Enrolment of temporary residents procedures](#)
- [Student Information Request Form \(DOCX 318 KB\)](#)
- [Guide for retention and storage of enrolment documents \(PDF 121 KB\)](#)
- [Translated documents](#)
- Legal issues bulletin 43 – [Enrolment of students in government schools](#)
- Legal issues bulletin 55 – [Transgender students in schools](#)
- Legal Issues Bulletin 20 – [Changing the way a student name is used and recorded by schools](#)
- Supporting transfer of enrolment information between the 3 NSW education sectors – [Information sharing between principals and schools \(staff only\) \(PDF 128 KB\)](#)
- [Family law guidelines](#)
- [Guidelines for the Management of Health and Safety Risks Posed to Schools by a Student's Violent Behaviour \(staff only\) \(PDF 748 KB\)](#)
- Template for risk assessment – [Student-tailored risk management plan \(staff only\) \(DOCX 356 KB\)](#)
- Enrolment of international students and exchange students – [Overseas students, visitors and partnerships procedures](#)
- [Student attendance in NSW public schools procedures](#)

Related information

- [Education Act 1990](#)
- [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#)
- [NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977](#)

- [NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014](#)
- [Age Discrimination Act 2004 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Racial Discrimination Act 1975 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Multicultural NSW Act 2000](#)
- [Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002](#)
- [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#)
- [State Records Act 1998](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice 2007](#)
- [Public Health Act 2010](#)

Policy contact

Contact

Director, Student Participation
[02 7814 3869](tel:0278143869)
enrolment@det.nsw.edu.au

Monitoring the policy

The Director, Student Participation, monitors the implementation of this procedure, regularly reviews its contents to ensure relevance and accuracy, and updates it as needed.



This information is current as at "9/2/2025 8:47:38 am", Australian Eastern Time. For the most up-to-date information, go to <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2002-0006-01>

© State of New South Wales (Department of Education), 2025. For more information go to <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/copyright>.
