



Burwood East Special Developmental School

Enrolment Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact school on 03 9803 4590.

BACKGROUND

Burwood East Special Developmental School provides educational programs for students who have an intellectual disability. At Burwood East Special Developmental School (BESDS), we consider the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and young people to be our highest priority. We strive to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at our school at all times. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently. We are committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive school environment where all students can be happy, confident and resilient, regardless of their sexual or gender identity, cultural background disability or other circumstances. We take account of the diversity of all children, including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and vulnerable children.

By law in Victoria all children from the age of 6 up until they turn 17 years must be enrolled at a registered school or registered for home schooling unless they have a reasonable excuse. School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with a comprehensive educational program and access to support networks. It also helps to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and active participation in their local community.

Specialist schools, including Burwood East Special Developmental School have been established to cater for the specific educational needs of students with a disability or with additional needs. Under State and Federal discrimination law, specialist schools are permitted to set specific enrolment criteria and to not enrol students who do not meet these criteria.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to specify the enrolment criteria for students seeking enrolment at Burwood East Special Developmental School and the evidence required to support applications for enrolment.

It is intended to provide clarity for the local community on the enrolment criteria and ensure a smooth and supported transition for enrolling students.

If you do not understand any aspect of this policy, or you would like to talk about any concerns you have, please contact our school on 03 9803 4590 or burwood.east.sds@education.vic.gov.au

Scope

Enrolment at Burwood East Special Developmental School (BESDS) is based on a student's disability and associated educational needs. Subject to capacity, student intake may be at any stage of the year, providing the student is of school age and satisfies the eligibility criteria. All applications for enrolment at BESDS require regional approval.

ENROLMENT CRITERIA

The following enrolment criteria have been specified and approved by the Regional Director, North Eastern Victoria Region (as the Minister's delegate) under section 2.2.16(b) of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic).

The enrolment criteria have been determined based on the identified education needs of students in the community. A student's enrolment will be reviewed periodically in line with their needs.

Students seeking to enrol must have:

Intellectual Disability

A diagnosis of Intellectual Disability from a registered psychologist evidenced by:

- A. Sub-average general intellectual functioning which is demonstrated by a full-scale score of two standard deviations or more below the mean score on a standardised individual test of general intelligence, (for example a full scale score of 70 or below on one of the recommended standardised individual tests of intelligence);
and
- B. Significant deficits in adaptive behaviour established by a composite score of two standard deviations or more below the mean on an approved standardised test of adaptive behaviour, (for example a Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales composite score of 70 or below);
and
- C. A history and evidence of an ongoing problem with an expectation of continuation during the school years.

In addition, students must meet the enrolment criteria to enrol. As a prescribed Special Developmental School we cater for students with moderate to severe intellectual disability as diagnosed by an accredited psychologist or psychiatrist as follows:

- FSIQ below 55 measured on the age appropriate Wechsler test and
- a Vineland ABS of 70 or below along with
- a summary statement by the testing psychologist or psychiatrist

Students with a dual diagnosis:

For students with a dual diagnosis of disabilities, an appropriate specialist setting may be influenced by:

- the disability judged to be the primary disability
- the category of disability that the PSD application is submitted under and meets eligibility criteria for the availability of a placement at a specialist school.

Dual Enrolment:

Dual enrolment is when parents decide that their child would benefit from attending a specialist school and regular school on a part time basis. BESDS works cooperatively with the partner school to provide a cohesive education. When both are government schools the PSD funding is shared between them depending on the time fraction at each.

Alternative and Functional Placements:

In exceptional circumstances approval may be granted to enrol at BESDS by the Regional Director for students who do not fit our enrolment criteria. The process to gain approval is as follows:

- request in writing to the school by parent/guardians
- considered by the principal, who must make a written recommendation for consideration by the regional director
- forwarded to the relevant regional director, with all supporting documentation attached, via email
- assessed by the regional director, who must consider eligibility, the principal's recommendation and all other relevant circumstances, and make a decision regarding the application
- approved in writing by the relevant regional director. The regional office should notify both the parent and school of the decision.

Information required for Enrolment

Applications from students who do not meet the above criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the region, in consultation with the Principal, in consideration of the student's education and support needs. The Regional Director, North Eastern Victoria Region must approve enrolments for students who do not meet the eligibility criteria.

PRIORITY ORDER OF PLACEMENT

In circumstances where the school may not have sufficient accommodation to be able to accept all applications from eligible students, the school will manage enrolment applications in accordance with the following priority order of placement:

1. Students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time.
2. Students who reside nearest to the school. [Getting to and from school for students with disability | Victorian Government](#)

The school must ensure that all applicants eligible under the first criterion have been offered a place before moving to consideration of the second criterion.

Verification of permanent address

When assessing enrolment applications under the priority order of placement, Burwood East Special Developmental School (BESDS) may ask for supporting documentation to assist them in verifying a student's permanent residence.

Burwood East Special Developmental school may request original or certified copies of rental agreements, unconditional contracts of sale or other official documentation that demonstrates permanent residence.

Documents should show the same address and parent's/carer's name as recorded on the school enrolment application form.

The school may also make the following enquiries to verify the information provided:

- a) checking the electoral roll at an Australian Electoral Commission office or the Victorian Electoral Commission head office
- b) checking with a real estate agent to confirm a rental address
- c) for a rental property which is a studio apartment or a one-bedroom unit, checking whether there are any regulations/codes limiting the occupancy of these apartments to one person per apartment

The enrolment application may be unsuccessful if, after reasonable enquiries, the Principal is unable to verify that the evidence provided is genuine and valid. Applicants may then seek to appeal the decision according to the Appeal process outlined below.

Enrolment on compassionate grounds

In exceptional circumstances, a student seeking enrolment at Burwood East Special Developmental School who meets the enrolment criteria may be approved by the Regional Director North Eastern Region Victoria outside of the priority order of placement, based on compassionate grounds. This is an overarching consideration and does not form part of the priority order of placement. Further advice and support when considering applications on compassionate grounds is available on the [Policy and Advisory Library](#) and from regional staff.

EVIDENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

To support a student's application for enrolment, the following evidence and supporting information should be provided:

Intellectual Disability

A signed psychologists's report from within the last 24 months reporting the results of an IQ test and assessment of adaptive behaviour is needed.

Burwood East Special developmental School's enrolment forms must be submitted to the office prior to the student commencing school. Enrolment forms must include:

- date of birth (note: evidence of date of birth can be official, such as a birth certificate or passport and visa).
- names and addresses of the student and enrolling parent or guardian
- details of medical and other conditions that may require special consideration
- emergency telephone numbers, including a nominated doctor
- an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register
- the name of the previous school and the student's current year level, where students transfer from another school.

Early Education

BESDS Early Education Program is available for children aged two years and eight months who have a development delay in two or more areas.

For enrolment, parents must provide supporting documentation from a paediatrician with a diagnosis stating that the child has a developmental delay in two or more areas.

Children may attend the program for up to two years but cannot attend beyond the legal age for schooling.

A child may attend one specialist school Early Education Program. Children can still attend other early childhood education programs on other days.

NOTE: Enrolment applications may not be successful if the requested documentation is not provided or invalid.

APPEAL PROCESS

Parents/carers can appeal against the decision not to approve an enrolment. This can occur in relation to enrolments at any age level. Parents or carers seeking to appeal a specialist school's enrolment decision should lodge a written appeal with the school. The Department will contact parents/carers with further information after an appeal is lodged.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Burwood East Special Developmental School enrolment policy will be made available to the school community on the school's website.

<https://www.besds.vic.edu.au/>

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	October 2022
Approved by	Principal 31/10/2022
Next scheduled review date	October 2025