

Policy Name	Enrolment Policy & Priorities
Related Policies and Legislation	School Education Act; Disability Standards for Education 2005 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Privacy Act 1988 Privacy Principles 2014
Policy Category	Safe & Supportive Environment S3.8 Attendance
Relevant Audience	All SMS Community; Board of Governance
Date of Issue / Last Revision	July 2015 22 September 2018 Jan 2021: minor
Date Set for Review	October 2023
Person/s Responsible for Review	SMS Administration

Enrolment Policy and Priorities

Sydney Montessori School is a small school with composite classes. Class sizes are limited and variable and take into account the recommendations of the class teacher and specialist teachers who work in consultation with the class teacher. In order to create a successful learning environment at SMS, it is essential that the school and family are compatible.

SMS encourages families to begin their children’s education in the Montessori First Steps Playgroup 0-3 years old, continue through Stage 1 (or Long Day Care) and Stage 2, Stage 3 (Primary) and Stage 4 (High School)

This Policy is to assist prospective parents or legal guardians in making a conscious choice to enrol their child/ren at Sydney Montessori School.

All applications will be processed in order of receipt and consideration will be given to applicant’s support for the ethos of the school, siblings who already attend the school and other criteria as determined by the school. Once enrolled, students and their families are expected to support the school’s ethos and comply with school rules to maintain the educational environment.

If an enrolment is not accepted, SMS reserves the right not to enter into discussion as to the reasons that the enrolment was not accepted or is terminated in line with the policies of the school.

In an effort to achieve a compatible result and to ensure equity for all applicants, SMS has developed the following criteria for placing families on the waiting list:

- The readiness of the child and the compatibility of the child and family with the Montessori system, as it is implemented at SMS. This is assessed through an enrolment process including: the completed Application for Enrolment form; school reports and other supporting documentation as requested by SMS; a visit to the school; and interviews with the prospective family.
- Families who already have siblings enrolled at SMS and do not have outstanding school fees.
- Families committed to a Montessori education, whose child/ren have been educated at a Montessori school other than SMS.
- Families who have shown commitment to SMS's education through Playgroup or Long Day Care.
- Application for Enrolment form fully completed, signed and returned to the office along with requested supporting documentation and the Application Fee received by SMS.
- Receipt date of application for enrolment in chronological order taken from the date that the application was submitted with fees paid.
- Children with Additional Needs - Related to Disability, Health, Mental Health & Other Areas Requiring Support. SMS will gather information about a student's disability and need for adjustments before an enrolment is confirmed in order for the school to appropriately plan to include the student. Parents will have numerous reports which could be of assistance. Of these, the following current reports would be particularly helpful:
 - Previous school reports and current school achievements.
 - Psychologist report documenting functional skills and IQ test results.
 - Speech pathologist reports documenting receptive and expressive language skills and any recommendations for programs or technology in the classroom, if relevant.
 - Occupational therapy reports documenting self-help skills and mobility, if relevant.
 - Medical specialist reports, if relevant.
 - Vision and hearing reports, if relevant.

Please note: Enrolment and Consent Orders

Disputes may arise about who should sign an enrolment form. Before a parent or legal guardian signs an enrolment form the school should enquire about the availability of any Family Court Orders and Parenting Plans in relation to the child.

If the Court Order or Parenting Plan indicates which parent or legal guardian should make the decision about where the child goes to school, the enrolment form should be signed by that parent or parents or legal guardian.

The school must not have the enrolment form signed solely by a parent or legal guardian who does not have the right to make the decision.

Where there are no Court Orders or Parenting Plans the Family Court Act says that each of the parents of the child has parental responsibility. This means that either parent can independently of each other, make a decision about their child, including where the child should attend school.

Policy on Readiness to Enter Stage 1

In addition to the above criteria, children entering into Stage 1 (Early Childhood 3 years 4 years and Kindergarten) must also meet the readiness criteria as listed below. Children should be:

- 3 years or older.
- Toilet trained (or in late stages of training) and able to take themselves to the toilet.
- Able to enter the classroom unaided by the parent/legal guardian (except in cases of physical disability).
- Able to separate from the parent/carer.
- Able to interact socially with other children in a group situation and individually.
- Able to listen to instructions.
- Able to follow and carry through an activity to completion to the best of their ability.
- Seen as ready by parent/legal guardian and teacher.

If the enrolling student is younger than 3 years of age and applying for a place in Stage 1 in upcoming years, the process will be the same until the orientation. As children this age are too young to attend a full morning in Stage 1, a place may be offered at the time of Application. In these cases prior to commencement an orientation program will still be available.

If at or before this time it is decided that the child should be withdrawn due to readiness, the family will be offered a place in Long Day Care if it is available.

Sydney Montessori School does not discriminate in its enrolment policies or procedures on the basis of gender, race, religion or disability.