

Section:			
Policy:	Priority of Enrolment		
Policy No:		Review Date:	20 August 2013
Quality Area/s:	6	Date of Approval:	

INTRODUCTION

In the operation of Karuna Montessori School, it is desirable to achieve a balance on gender and age groups. On gender, an even split is preferable. On age, three even cohorts of three, four and five year olds would be optimal. Families are expected to commit to their child to attend the full 3 year program.

Northern Beaches Montessori Association (NBMA) in running Karuna Montessori School accepts and acknowledges that the enrolment procedures followed may be discretionary in nature, giving preference to some individuals.

The enrolment process must be non-discriminatory on the basis of race, religion, beliefs, social position or sex (other than for the balance described above), and also with regard to physical or mental disabilities.

The procedures in this policy are designed to achieve the above enrolment balance, while attempting to achieve placements resulting in a full enrolment.

This policy seeks to make the enrolment process more transparent.

The enrolment will not exceed thirty (30) children per day, being the maximum allowable under the Early Childhood Education & Care (ECEC) license.

The following procedures deal with the enrolment issues of:

- Waiting Lists
- Placement Offers
- Open Days
- Parent Information Evenings
- Other Issues

AIM

To ensure a fair and equitable administration of the Enrolment Waiting List, and to fill and balance (on gender and age) the student places.

PROCEDURE

The Enrolment Administrator will keep families on the Waiting List informed of events at the school through newsletters and other publicity items, including invitations to Open Days, Parent Information Evenings, etc. The Enrolment Administrator is also responsible for communicating with these families for keeping current their contact details.

Waiting Lists:

The Enrolments Administrator is responsible for keeping a waiting list of prospective enrolments. In the first instance, this list should be in chronological order, giving preference to potential families who have been on the list the longest and fit the operational criteria outlined above in the introduction. A non-refundable waiting list fee applies. Current or past members of the Association may add subsequent children to the list at 50% of the Waiting List Fee.

- Priority in offering placements go to:
 - Children of families that are current or past members of the Association (i.e. they have or have had a child enrolled at the school). If at the time of a placement offer it is known that a previous child of the family did not complete the three year program at Karuna (as defined in their placement contract), then any preferential treatment is forfeited and discretion may be exercised against making a subsequent placement offer.
 - Children who are currently attending the Karuna Under 3 Program.
 - Children who have transferred from other similar Montessori schools.

Placement Offers:

- Placement Offers will be made from time to time to fill vacancies and recruit a new cohort (a year's intake) by the Enrolment Administrator. Offers are to be made using the criteria outlined in the introduction. The Enrolment Administrator should discuss all planned placement offers with the Director to assess the child's suitability, and inform the Enrolments Officer when a new child will be attending the school.
- When making placement offers to a cohort, the first round offers should be made by early May, as other schools make offers in this period and to avoid families on our waiting list accepting earlier offers.
- History has shown (and it is common sense) that some members of a cohort will not complete a full three year cycle – whether due to the family moving for work, financial difficulties or other reasons. Thus with some expected drop-outs each year, a new cohort of slightly larger than one-third of the class size can be accommodated.
- Children older than three years will not normally be offered a position, unless they have already been attending a Montessori school, or there is a need for older children. Such enrolments are limited to approximately 10% of the class. Children who have not reached their third birthday cannot be enrolled as per the ECEC license.
- The Agreed School Cycle for a child begins on enrolment (some time after their 3rd birthday), and continues for approximately 3 years. The minimum time for its completion is determined as follows:
 - a) if the child's birthday falls on or before 30 June, then completion of the cycle means completion of the Term Four in the year of the child's 5th birthday;
 - b) a child whose birthday is in the above category, is encouraged to stay for an additional year, being the end of Term Four in the year of the child's 6th birthday;
 - c) if a child's birthday falls after 30 June, then completion of the cycle means completion of Term Four in the year of the child's 6th birthday.
- A Placement Agreement is to be signed by the child's parents/guardians, the Director and the Enrolment Administrator for each new child. This is to be accompanied by the payment of a non-refundable Placement Fee and a bond of one term's fees. The Agreement also needs to state the first year's membership fees for the Association (i.e. the amount of the fee in the year the child starts, not necessarily the year the agreement is signed). This amount should be checked with the Treasurer.

Open Days:

- One of the most important tasks of the year for the Enrolments Officer is the coordination of the Open Day. The Enrolments Officer in conjunction with the Promotions Officer and the Enrolments Administrator should provide overall coordination and oversight for the preparations for the day.
- A check list for jobs to be done for Open Days is available.



Parent Information Evenings:

- The Enrolments Administrator is responsible for organising one information evening per term in consultation with the Director. This is an opportunity for prospective parents to hear more about Karuna and the Montessori Method. Invitations should be extended to current parents, families who have been offered a placement or are on the wait list, and other prospective parents seeking information. The Enrolment Officer should also be present at the Parent Information Evening to greet and introduce visitors etc.
- The venue needs to be coordinated with the Property Officer and Landlords. Light refreshments (coffee, tea, biscuits etc) should also be coordinated by the Enrolments Officer.

Other Issues:

- The Enrolments Administrator is responsible for the distribution of a contact list at the beginning of each new term, showing all enrolments – both on-going and newly commencing students – together with details the parents/guardians requested to circulate to the parent body. This information is to be clearly labelled with “This information is for the use of Karuna Montessori families only and is not to be used for any other purpose”. This list must also comply with the Privacy Act. Details of this list should be checked with the parents to notify to the school of any change of details.
- The Enrolments Administrator is to liaise with parents and the Director with regard to the pre-commencement interview/s and the coordinating of starting dates.
- The Enrolments Administrator is to liaise with the Director for the arranging of Observation Visits by current and prospective parents, and other members of the public.

EVALUATION

Successful orientation and enrolment procedures promote smooth transitions between home and service. Information sharing and the signing of authorisations ensures a safe and secure environment for the child.

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Sources

- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations – www.deewr.gov.au
- Community Child Care Cooperative
- Montessori Quality Assurance Program

