

Ponatahi Christian School Enrolment Policy , God willing

Reviewed March 2023

Rationale

- a) Ponatahi Christian School (the School) has been established primarily for the children of the Reformed Congregations of New Zealand. (ref Obj 1)
- b) The school has a Special Character to reflect the values of the Christian Religion as taught by the Reformed Congregations of New Zealand. (ref Obj 2)
- c) The school has a Supplementary Agreement (2018) to the Integration Agreement (1998) with the Ministry of Education which allows a maximum roll of 160 of which a maximum of 10% students may be “Non-preference”. The Ministry of Education allows a 5% flexibility on the roll limit to ease the management of the roll, and enabling families to stay together, provided that the school has a “sinking lid” policy to reduce the roll back to the official maximum. (ref Obj 3)
- d) The current school building has a capacity for 135 students. The BOP’s desire is that a further building project and associated role increase is kept in reserve for an anticipated influx of students from the preference church communities beyond 2024. (ref Obj 4,5)
(The BOP has approved a ‘growth’ of up to 5 students per annum at New Entrant level). **NOTE Obj 5**

Objectives

1. To prioritise entry to the students for whom the school is intended.
2. To ensure that the environment of the school, including the mix of students, is unlikely to infringe on the Special Character
3. To ensure that enrolments do not exert undue pressure on the human or physical resources in any part of the school.
4. To ensure that the maximum total roll does not exceed 135 in the years 2019 to 2024, and the maximum number of “Non-Preference” students does not exceed 12.
(From Rationale d) Due to approved growth these maximums can be stated as 140 in 2023, 145 in 2024, and 150 in 2025.
5. To ensure, as far as reasonably possible, that a high priority family moving into the region, unforeseen, will have space available for their children.

Criteria for Enrolment

The order of priority for acceptance of domestic students is set out below:

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Priority 1: | Dependents of families which are official members of the Reformed Congregations of New Zealand, Carterton. |
| Priority 2 | Dependents of families which regularly attend the Reformed Congregations of New Zealand, are not official members, but are recommended by the church’s consistory. |
| Priority 3 | New entrants with older brothers and sisters currently enrolled at the school and dependents of staff members. These children are not necessarily preference as they could be siblings of a non preference student. |
| Priority 4. | Dependents of families which regularly attend a church which the school Proprietors are satisfied has similar beliefs to the Reformed Congregations of New Zealand. This requires official acceptance of a Reformed or Presbyterian Confession dating from the Reformation period. (In the Wairarapa this is the Reformed Church, Masterton and the Free Presbyterian Church, Carterton.) |

(Note, any families under this priority but unknown to the BOP would still require a family visit for the purpose of introduction and expectation)

- Priority 5. Dependents of families who are identified by the BOT/BOP with a strong desire to uphold our Special Character.
Such an application must meet the standards of “Preference” student as set by the school Proprietors. A set of questions issued after vetting the application is expected to be answered and returned, followed up by a family visit from the BOP
- Priority 6. New entrants from “Non –Preference” families.
- Priority 7 “Non-Preference” children transferring from another school.

Notes

- ◆ Preference students are those who can fit into one of Priorities 1,2, and 4 above (and possibly 5 after a BOP Family visit). The Board of Proprietors has the oversight of “Preference” status, but is subject to The Consistory of the Reformed Congregations of New Zealand, Carterton.
- ◆ The Board of Trustees (or its delegated authority) may consider other factors in addition to those listed above in establishing preference for entry. Such special cases will be submitted to the full Board of Trustees for consideration.
- ◆ Satisfying any of the criteria above does not guarantee acceptance of enrolment.

Enrolment Zone

There is no zoning associated with this policy, as the desirability of the school to a prospective family has little to do with where the family lives.

Although the school may from time to time provide transport from some areas, in all cases it is assumed upon application that the caregiver undertakes to get the child safely to and from school on time

Procedures

1. All applications for enrolments must be made in writing on the official form which is available from the school office.
2. The Principal is to inform the BOT and BOP when applications are received, and is to seek clarification on Preference Status from the BOP on all applications where this status is not clear.
3. Applications may either be received or declined by the principal in accordance with this policy, or put on the waiting list. The application will be tabled at the next BOT (In Committee) meeting for acceptance or pending approval from BOP (in case of a non-preference application). In all cases the caregiver is to be informed and the application form to be appropriately filed.
4. Priority 1 students are guaranteed entry into the school, even if it means that the BOP or Reformed Congregation needs to assist the BOT in some capacity. However, except in the case of a significant number of priority 1 students coming into the school from overseas at short notice, the BOT is expected to plan for priority 1 intake in the first place, followed by priorities 1 to 4.
5. The school office is to maintain an up to date list of expected new entrants based upon pre-school children in the preference church communities and younger siblings of current school families.
6. When the school roll reaches 90% (Obj 4), or is expected to go over this 90% on the basis of known likely new entrants then only priority 1-4 students will be accepted without specific dispensation to be given to the BOT by the BOP. (ie. A family visit by two BOP members)
7. The BOT will liaise with the BOP at all times (updated waiting list and roll numbers) so that the BOP has adequate warning (3-5 years) to action a building program to adjust to the capacity up to 160.
8. Any enrolment approved pursuant to the policy which is subsequently discovered to have been based on misleading information or misrepresentation on any matter of fact may be declared invalid at any time at the

discretion of the Board of Trustees, and the right to enrolment may terminate forthwith, also at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

Waiting List

Where children are not accepted on initial application, they may be placed on the waiting list. This will only occur if it seems reasonably possible that a place may become available within the next two years, when considering the Objectives and Procedures of this policy.

The waiting list is physically a file of application forms in the principal's office, combined with the list of known pre-schoolers on the "School Data" document which is regularly updated and given to all staff and the Board of Trustees' members. This data list will make clear which potential future students have enrolment confirmed and which are on the waiting list.