



Enrolment Policy

Rationale:

The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) specifically provides an exception (meaning that it does not constitute discrimination) for educational authorities to operate an educational institution or program wholly or mainly for students with a general or particular disability and allows exclusion of people who do not have that disability, from that institution or program.

The Regional Director is required to approve all enrolment requests for students wishing to enrol in the school. This decision will be made on receipt of all information presented at the SSG meeting for those students who do not automatically qualify.

Definition:

To be automatically eligible to enrol at Belvoir Special School a student MUST:

- Be in receipt of funding via the Program for Students with Disabilities.
- This funding must be under the category of Intellectual disability.

DEECD Policy:

In situations where a student does not have automatic approval to be enrolled at Belvoir the parent/carer/guardian and Principal of the enrolling school are in agreement, the process to be followed is outlined in DET document titled “**Placement in Special Schools**” – which details **Alternative Placements** and **Functional Placements**

In situations where the request for an Alternative Placement comes from the parent/guardian/carer of the student and is not agreed to by Belvoir staff, the *Protocols of Best Practice* sets out the process to be followed

Implementation:

Dual Diagnosis

For students with a dual diagnosis of disabilities, enrolment at Belvoir will only be granted as long as an intellectual disability is part of the diagnosis.

- For example students who have a dual diagnosis of an intellectual disability and a physical disability may be enrolled at the school while a student diagnosed with a Severe Behaviour Disorder and physical disability will not be automatically enrolled.
- Similarly a student with a dual diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder may enrol if they have a dual diagnosis of an intellectual disability, but not if they have dual diagnosis of severe behaviour disorder.
- Where funding is provided through PSD via Autism or Physical Disability the student may be enrolled at Belvoir as long as they meet the criteria for an intellectual disability and an application for a change of category is completed.

New and interstate students that have not been funded who wish to attend Belvoir:

Following comprehensive interviewing of parents, observation of student and scrutiny of current reports, an Application for Student (as future student) for PSD funding may be submitted by the School on behalf of the student.

For students transferring from Interstate, if there is a sufficient belief that the application will be successful, the student may be enrolled into the school at this time. Or, if the student is transferring from a special school in another state, the student may be enrolled immediately and the application for funding completed within a 10 week period.

If there is some doubt regarding the eligibility of a student to be funded under the intellectual disability criteria the student should be enrolled within a mainstream school and staff should assist them to complete the application for PSD funding. If successful, the student may then be enrolled at Belvoir.

Whenever a student is enrolled at Belvoir an Enrolment Request form needs to be submitted to the North East Victoria Regional Office. This request need to be signed by the parent/guardian/carer and Principal, and should be submitted to the Regional Director, for approval to enrol the student.

Functional Placements and Alternative Placements:

See Appendix

Protocols of Best Practice

As part of the transition process to Belvoir, parents/guardians/carers are encouraged to visit the School and discuss their child's enrolment.

In cases where the requested/selected school (by parent/guardian/carer) is not deemed the 'appropriate specialist setting' and agreement is not reached with the Principal of that school, the following process is recommended:

1. The current school Principal is to call and chair a SSG meeting/s. Where possible, representatives should include:
 - the current class teacher
 - Principals from possible prospective schools, (eligible & the requested school)
 - parent/guardian/carer
 - appropriate allied health professionals
 - Regional representative/s

2. The agenda for that meeting should be based around:
 - up to date reports are presented to the selected Specialist School, describing current functioning of the student
 - the strengths of the student
 - challenges envisaged for the student
 - how the student would be supported at the school (to overcome/manage these challenges)
 - the amount of reasonable adjustment needed to ensure a successful placement of the student
 - a determined timeframe for monitoring progress of student
 - a date is set for a further meeting to make a decision regarding the student's future enrolment

3. Personnel from Belvoir Special School are to observe the student in their current setting

If it is agreed that the student is to be enrolled in a Specialist School setting, Belvoir will submit an Enrolment Request with a detailed explanation regarding the specific case.

Appeal

If agreement between parties is not reached a detailed report of the meeting and supporting documentation detailing the child's eligibility, is to be forwarded to the Regional Director and the parent/guardian/carer is to be advised of an appeal process. The Parent/guardian/carer is to submit a written request to the Regional Director for final decision.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed every year as part of the School's three year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on

September 12 2018

Appendix

If enrolment of a student is directed into Belvoir and the student is ineligible, then written advice detailing the reasons for the enrolment plus the funding arrangements must be received by the school from the Regional Director, prior to enrolment.

Best practice for the transition process from the mainstream to Belvoir should include involvement of the appropriate staff member attending an SSG meeting prior to the transition process.

Alternative and Functional Placements

The Department has a responsibility to ensure there are placement alternatives for parents/guardians/carers, so that some choice of schooling is available.

Alternative Placements (PSD Eligible)

In some circumstances, Regional Student Wellbeing teams may approve the Enrolment of a student who is eligible for PSD support within a special school, but outside of that school's operational mode (based on disability type) This type of enrolment approval directs SRP allocation of the student's PSD level funding and core funding to the special school.

Process for managing alternative placements:

Principals approach the regional office with a request for permission to enroll the student in a special school.

This request needs to be accompanied by SSG notes signed by parents/guardians/carers and the previous school principal indicating that placement within a special school is in the students best interests.

The school then uploads and registers the enrolment from CASES 21 to PSDMS

The authorization of the allocation of funds is managed by the region via PSDMS Special School Approvals.

This screen displays the student's eligibility status and disability category of their current application and their current enrolment approval.

Funding is not backdated for special schools approvals processed in PSDMS after budget dates. It is recommended that PSDMS enrolment approvals be reviewed prior to term budget dates.

Functional Placements (PSD Ineligible)

If it is deemed appropriate a Regional Director has the discretion and the authority to approve the enrolment of a student **ineligible for PSD support** in a special School. The approved enrolment in such a circumstance enables **core funding** to be allocated in the SRP.

Process for identifying new functional placements:

Principals approach the Regional Office with a request for permission to enroll the student in a special school. This request needs to be accompanied by SSG notes signed by parents/guardians/carers and the previous school principal indicating that placement within a special school is in the students best interests.

Once approval is obtained, the Regional Office sends a letter confirming this arrangement to the school and the Student Wellbeing and Health Support Division.

This is an annual process completed by Term 1 Census day each year (when core funding is determined in the SRP.)

Core funding cannot be backdated for functional placements identified after the Term 1 Census each year, consistent with the annual allocation of core funding in special schools.

Process for reviewing functional placements each year:

A list of pre-identified functional placements is provided to the region at the start of Term 1 each year.

This list is reviewed by the region to confirm the continuation of arrangements. All pre-existing functional placements should be considered carefully for continuation each year.

A letter indicating that a functional placement is required to continue for a further 12 months needs to be forwarded to the Regional Director at this time.

A final list with relevant additions/revisions is returned to the Student Wellbeing and Health Support Division by the Term 1 Census, with new functional placements identified via the completion of the process above.