

# Enrolment Policy

**Purpose:** To make visible the criteria on which offers of enrolments are determined to ensure a good match between Parents/Carers, Students, and the School.

To conduct enrolments in a fair and transparent manner which complies with all relevant State and Federal laws and VRQA Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration.

**Scope:** Parents/Carers who want to enrol a child at Learning Co-operative, Parents/Carers who have a child enrolled at Learning Co-operative

**Implemented by:** School Coordinator (Principal), Enrolment Officer (Parent Volunteer Position), Parent Group, Administration

**Approved by:** LC Board

**Communicated via:** Website, Policy Folder, Enrolment information packs provided to prospective families

**Reviewed:** Every three years, as legislative changes arise, or improvements identified

## Overview

Learning Co-operative (Co-op) provides a small, 'extended family' experience to children in a primary school environment where parents/carers (in this policy, "parents") are given a unique opportunity to take a direct and meaningful role in all aspects of the educational program. Co-op embodies the concept that 'it takes a village to raise a child' and provides a rare and genuine, close-knit community experience that helps build a child's independence, self-worth, resilience, self-understanding and acceptance.



Co-op delivers the Victorian Curriculum in a creative and integrated way. Small, multi-age groups enable learning experiences to be individually tailored in a way that is often aspired to but impossible to practically achieve in larger mainstream schools. Children have freedom to take managed risks, learn at their own pace and play. They can follow their interests and are supported to take control of their learning. The acres of bush and organic garden beds give them unsurpassed access to nature and the benefits of learning through nature.

To achieve our philosophy, Co-op is structured and organised as a parent-run school with parents involved in all aspects of running the school through our Time On requirements. This includes: attending regular school meetings; contributing a half- or whole day per week at the school to help with student activities; cleaning; and working bees.

It is important that families appreciate and support our philosophy, co-operative structure, school program and approach to teaching and learning (which is outlined on our website and at open days), to ensure a good match between their child(ren) and the school.

Enrolment at the school will only be offered after careful consideration of the likelihood of a successful match between the school and the student and family, bearing in mind the school's unique environment and approach to learning, the level of resonance between student and family values and the school's philosophy and values, the needs of the student and the ability of the school to meet those needs.

## Roles & Responsibilities

The Parent Group is responsible for:

- authorising the enrolment policy and for approving the criteria for enrolment.
- approving the terms and conditions contained within the enrolment agreement.
- approving offers of enrolment in line with this policy
- reviewing a student's enrolment in line with terms set out in the Behaviour Management Policy, School Fee Policy, Attendance Policy, and Enrolment Agreement, and if required, cancelling the enrolment
- ensuring the implementation of the enrolment policy is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory

The Coordinator is responsible for:

- ensuring enrolment agreements are publicly available and that they are administered and recorded accurately.
- ensuring the enrolment register is accurately maintained.
- ensuring this policy and the enrolment agreement are implemented.



- communicating the school's decision to offer enrolment or otherwise.
- ensuring that adjustments are made to the enrolment process to accommodate disability.

Families wishing to enrol a student are responsible for:

- Following the processes outlined in this policy.
- Providing all information that is required as part of the enrolment process by the due dates.
- Ensuring all information provided to the school is accurate, and a full and true representation of the student

## Enrolment Eligibility Criteria

In order to be considered for enrolment at Learning Co-operative, the following criteria must be met:

- Parents and students must actively participate in the enrolment process outlined below with honesty and transparency and show their desire to form a strong relationship with the school.
- It must be determined by the school that there is a match between both student and family with the school values and philosophy, and the learning program, which will be determined by the school through the enrolment process outlined below.
- Parents and students must be willing to abide by the conditions set out in the Enrolment Agreement and all school policies.
- It must be determined by the school that it can meet the needs of the student, as identified through the enrolment process.
- Parents must be willing to meet the conditions and requirements set out in The Learning Co-operative Rules and Membership Pack, including but not limited to:
  - Parents must have a valid Working with Children's Check.
  - Parents must be able to undertake the weekly Time On requirements as outlined in the Co-operative Rules and on the school website.
  - Parents must be able to attend fortnightly meetings on Monday nights from 6pm to take part in consensus decision making around running the school
  - Parents must be able to attend termly working bees and weekend cleaning
  - Parents must take on an 'Area to Love' e.g. membership of at least one committee, the Board or assistance with areas such as enrolment and administration.
- Enrolment is only available to residents of Australia.

## Enrolment Assessment Process and factors determining enrolment



## Enrolment Process

1. Interested families are required to review the following information on the school's website: About Us, Philosophy, Curriculum, the school's fee policy and the school's enrolment agreement.
2. If the information at Step 1 feels like a match for your family, you are required to attend an Open Day or if there are none scheduled contact the school to book a tour.
3. After your visit to an Open Day or school tour you will be invited to fill out an Expression of Interest form if you indicate you wish to progress in the process.

As a small school we have limited vacancies, and the steps below only take place when a spot in an appropriate grade/year becomes available.

4. Prospective families will be invited to attend a meeting with the Coordinator to ask any questions, and for the Coordinator to determine any adjustments or modifications that may be needed for the student during the enrolment process. At this stage the Coordinator will also seek to understand the match between the school's Time On Requirements and the family's situation, and their understanding and commitment to the school's philosophy.
5. If it is determined at this stage the likelihood of a match is high, prospective parents will need to supply a valid Working With Children's Check and undertake relevant induction, and will then be invited with their children to visit the school a minimum of 6 times within at least six weeks. Families may visit as many times as is necessary to gain a feel for the school and programs.

It is expected that both the prospective student and the parents engage in the full offering of programmed activities as this is the best way to get to know our school and how it operates to be able to feel confident in progressing in the process. There will be opportunities during these visits for parents to ask questions and seek further information from the school, for students to share information about themselves and for the school to request any additional information (such as but not limited to past school reports and if relevant information that will assist the school to determine what accommodations and adjustments that may be required in order for the prospective student to participate in the school's programs).

During these visits the school will record information and observations in relation to:

- How the prospective student engages with other students of all ages
- How the prospective student engages with the adults in the school
- How interested the prospective student is in engaging in learning and play-based activities in our environment
- How the prospective student responds to direct instructions



- How the prospective student manages themselves in our environment, including how they take care of their own belongings, school property and shared belongings
  - The way the prospective parents engage with the adults in our school
  - The way the prospective parents engage with all the students at our school
  - The ability of the parents to engage in the Time On requirements, including any limitations or restrictions to their availability
  - Any skills, qualifications or special interests the parents have that may be relevant
6. Once you have visited at least 6 times over at least weeks and if you feel it will be a good fit for your family, you can let us know that you would like to join the school.
  7. Based on the information collected by the school in Step 5, prospective Parents will be invited for an interview with the Parent Group. This meeting is an opportunity for the family to ask any outstanding questions, for the school to collect any additional information the school needs to be able to make a decision on the requested enrolment. The school will also use the meeting to ensure that the family understands the unique requirements and obligations parents must adhere to in relation to the Co-operative parent run nature of the school, including but not limited to The Learning Co-operative Rules and Membership Pack.
  8. After this interview, the Co-operative Members will discuss and make a consensus decision on whether or not to accept the enrolment.
  9. If there is a positive consensus decision, the school will formally offer enrolment on a probationary basis. After this meeting, you will be provided with all paperwork and documentation that needs completing prior to the student/s attendance and be issued with a fee invoice for payment.  
If the decision is made not to offer enrolment you will be notified in writing by the Coordinator.
  10. Given our unique educational setting and governance structure, there is a three-month probation period prior to moving to full enrolment. This probationary period is designed to give both families and the school time to confirm there is a good match between the school, student, family and existing families and students in all areas.  
After successful completion of three months at our school parents will be admitted as Members of The Learning Co-operative.
  11. New families will be assigned a 'Buddy' family to help with the adjustment to being part of the Co-operative. The Buddy family will meet with new families for a check-in at 1 month, 3 months and 6 months to see how everything is going and if there is anything the school can do to help with the transition, but families are encouraged to chat to us at any time outside of these check-ins too.

A successful enrolment requires a good relationship between all parties throughout the process, and a shared belief that the prospective student will be successful at Learning Co-operative and that the school and family will both benefit from the relationship.



At any stage throughout this process if you determine LC is not the right fit simply let us know and we can cease the enrolment process. If at any time you have questions or concerns regarding the process or outcomes, please raise them with the Coordinator as soon as possible. If you do not feel your concerns have been addressed, please refer to our Concerns & Complaints Policy.

At any stage throughout this process, including probationary enrolment periods, if LC feels the likelihood of a positive and successful outcome is unlikely, a meeting will be requested with parents to discuss the school's concerns. If the concerns are adequately resolved the process will resume with a renewed commitment. However, if the school continues to have concerns the school may elect to impose additional requirements within the Enrolment Assessment Process, choose to cease the enrolment assessment, place additional requirements within the probationary period of the offer of enrolment, or extend the probationary period.

## Conditions of Enrolment

The Enrolment Agreement is the contract for services between the school and the Parents/Carers and which the school and all families must enter into when enrolling their child(ren) at Learning Co-operative. The enrolment agreement is legally enforceable, and the terms and conditions contained within this contract set out the rights and responsibilities of each party to the contract.

## Enrolment Cancellation

A student's enrolment may be cancelled by the school in line with the School Fee Policy, Attendance Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, and Enrolment Agreement.

Parents/carers may cancel their child/ren's enrolment at any stage by giving one (1) Term's notice.

## Related Documentation

- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Co-operative's Rules
- Enrolment Agreement
- School Fees Policy