

Students in Out-of-home Care

Policy



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1 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to articulate the position of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) in relation to the education in Catholic Schools of children and young people in out-of-home care.

2 Scope of Policy

SACCS is the Approval Authority for the Students in Out-of-home Care Policy.

SACCS exercises responsibility and authority for the Enrolment Procedures with respect to this Policy in collaborative partnership with Religious Institute/Public Juridic Person entities.

For Diocesan Catholic schools, the procedures and guidelines generated by the Policy operate under the authority of the Directors of Catholic Education. They apply to all Diocesan Catholic schools and preschools.

SACCS recognises the opportunities to be found in the diverse approaches adopted in schools with different charisms and governing authorities.

Therefore, SACCS defines the scope of procedures and guidelines as applying to Diocesan Catholic schools in the first instance. It is recognised that non-Diocesan Catholic schools may have their own Policy, which applies instead of this document.

3 Underlying Principles

This Policy is founded on the following principles:

- (a) **Dignity:** Catholic schools recognise the dignity of all children and young people as persons made in the image of God, whose grace is continually at work in their lives.
- (b) **Preferential option for the poor:** sharing in Christ's love for the poor, Catholic schools offer all children and young people the opportunity for education, but first and foremost to the poor, disadvantaged and marginalised.
- (c) **Inclusion:** Catholic schools foster a culture of inclusion that responds to the educational needs of students regardless of their abilities, backgrounds or aspirations.
- (d) **Collaboration:** Catholic schools and offices work collaboratively with all those involved in the care and protection of children and young people in out-of-home care.
- (e) **Excellence:** Catholic schools and offices have high standards and continuous improvement in teaching methods, curriculum design, student outcomes and the overall educational environment.

4 Policy

Catholic schools in South Australia actively support the enrolment and educational achievement of children and young people in out-of-home care whose guardians and carers desire a Catholic education for those children and young people.

- (a) Catholic schools in South Australia welcome diversity and strive for inclusivity. They are open to and actively enrol children and young people in out-of-home care who are Catholic, of other denominations, other faiths, and none. These children and young people are welcomed into the school community. Their religious freedom, beliefs, and personal conscience are recognised and respected, as are those of their carers.
- (b) Catholic schools in South Australia do not relinquish their freedom and calling to proclaim the Gospel and to provide schooling and formation based on the values of Christian education; this is their right and duty. Catholic schools offer a Catholic education to children and young people in out-of-home care.
- (c) Catholic schools in South Australia maintain processes that are supportive of all students in out-of-home care who are enrolled in Catholic schools, including those who have been awarded a CESA Scholarship. These processes are inclusive of, but not limited to, approaches which support student attendance, engagement, retention, and learning.
- (d) South Australian Catholic schools and offices collaborate with the Department for Child Protection (DCP) to support all young people in out-of-home care enrolled in Catholic Schools. This includes those children and young people under the long-term guardianship of the Chief Executive of the DCP who are eligible to receive *Catholic Education South Australia Scholarships* who would otherwise be unable to access a Catholic education.

5 Responsibility for implementation, monitoring, and continual improvement

Responsibility for implementation, monitoring and review of the Policy is vested at the level appropriate to the following roles:

Catholic Education Offices	Catholic Schools
Director of School Quality and Performance, CESA	Principal
Manager: Diversity and Inclusion	School Board (or equivalent)

6 Supporting procedures or policy support documents

The following document is to be read in conjunction with, and is additional to, any other relevant South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS), school or CEO policy, procedure or support document.

- Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- CESA Aboriginal Education Action Plan 2025-2035
- Enrolment Policy
- Enrolment Procedures

- Students in Out-of-home-care Procedures
- Catholic Education South Australia Scholarship Procedures.

7 Definitions

In this Policy:

“out-of-home-care” means the court-ordered care of children aged under 18 who are unable to live with their families due to child safety concerns, where the care is provided in a placement on premises other than the child's home.

“Court-ordered care” means an order placing the child or young person:

- (a) under the guardianship of the Chief Executive of the Department or a specified person or persons for a period not exceeding 12 months (short-term order); or
- (b) under the guardianship of the Chief Executive or a specified person or persons until they attain 18 years of age (longer-term order); or
- (c) in the custody of the Chief Executive (custody order).

“placement” means care arrangements approved by the Department for Child Protection with:

- (a) a registered carer where there is ongoing case management and financial payment by the Department (foster care); or
- (b) a member of the child or young person's family where there is ongoing case management and financial payment by the Department (kinship care); or
- (c) a specified person to whom guardianship has been transferred (specific child only (SPO) care); or
- (d) a licensed children's residential facility operated by a non-government organisation with care provided by paid or contracted workers, and there is ongoing case management by the Department (residential care); or
- (e) a residential facility established and operated by the Department with care provided by paid or contracted workers, and there is ongoing case management by the Department (residential care).

(See the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*.)

8 Revision Record

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