



ENROLMENT FACT SHEET

Obligations of Proprietor

Enrolment is the responsibility of the Board (normally carried out by the principal in accordance with Board policy). The granting of preference is the prerogative of the Proprietor.

The legal obligations of the Proprietor

Section 442 of the Education Act states:

Preference of enrolment –

(1) Parents who have a particular or general philosophical or religious connection with an integrated school shall have preference for their children at the school.

(2) Subject to the provision of subsection (1) of this section, no prospective pupil shall be refused enrolment on the grounds of religion, race, socio-economic background, or lack of willingness of the parent to make financial contributions to the school.

The standard clause in the Integration Agreement of Catholic Schools states:

Preference of enrolment at the school under Section 29 (1) of the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975 (now Section 442 of the Education Act 1989) shall be given to only to those children whose parents have established a particular or general religious connection with the special character of the School and the Controlling Authority shall not give preference of enrolments to parents of any child unless the Proprietor has stated that those parents have established such a particular or general religious connection with the special character of the school.

Basic premises for interpreting criteria for granting preference

The following three premises are the basis for the interpretation of the five criteria to be used for granting preference:

Premise 1: Baptism or a well founded hope of baptism should be regarded as the norm in the granting of preference. Baptism may be a future event as a result of attending a Catholic school.

Premise 2: Catholic schools are an integral part of the evangelising mission of the Church.

Premise 3: The “family” will actively support the child in his/her faith formation and the practices of the Catholic Church.

It is important to note that the eligibility for preference of enrolment is based on factual conditions relating to the status of the person's connection to the Catholic Church, not on the state of their faith practices.

There is a need for:

- Bishops' agents who sign preference cards, to have a pastoral approach, recognising the significant role they play especially in the re-evangelisation of non-practising Catholics
- Catholic schools to be proactive in the evangelisation process
- the school and parish to have a close collaborative relationship, unified in their goal for active evangelisation and faith formation of the children and parents.