1. NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHOOL POLICY for JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BENDIGO

In Bendigo, neighbourhoods have been established for the four junior secondary colleges so that each college serves its local area as well as providing for balanced distribution of Bendigo district students. The colleges work together with Bendigo Senior Secondary College to provide a challenging, comprehensive and caring education for all students.

The designated neighbourhood school is the neighbourhood school that the student's permanent residence is situated in. Students who live more than 15kms from the General Post Office in Bendigo are deemed ‘Rural’ and can choose any of the four Colleges. (Country bus routes need to be considered).

These principles guide the process of Year 7 enrolment.

Attendance at a particular primary school does not automatically guarantee enrolment at a particular secondary school.

If you nominate a secondary school that is NOT your neighbourhood school –

(i) you are asked to provide additional information to support your application in case the school has to limit enrolments because of potential accommodation constraints.

(ii) you should list at least two preferences in Section 2 of the Application for Placement, Year 7, 2016 form.

If a student is not successful in gaining his/her preferences, he/she will be placed in their designated neighbourhood school.

All requests for enrolments in secondary schools from students living outside the neighbourhood area will be considered by a placement committee that is representative of the four junior secondary schools. All placements are subject to the availability of accommodation at the particular secondary school.

Where there are insufficient places at a school for all students who seek entry, students will be enrolled in the following priority order:

- students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time
- students who reside nearest the school
- students seeking enrolment on specific curriculum grounds
- in exceptional circumstances, compassionate grounds
- where there is a family history at the school.

Requests by parents for references from primary classroom teachers and or principals are not encouraged. The secondary school can check with the feeder school if any further information or verification is required. Generally secondary schools will inform parents of any other relevant information they may require and provide individual forms at information evenings.

Parents and students are encouraged to attend the information night of the school that is their neighbourhood school.

2. OLDER BROTHERS/SISTERS

If you wish your child to attend the same secondary school that their older brother or sister concurrently attends, you need to complete sections 1, 3 and 4 of the Application for Enrolment, Year 7, 2016 form and return it to the regional office via the enclosed envelope to confirm eligibility.

3. SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Should your child meet the criteria for entry into a special school or special developmental school, information about these schools will be supplied by your primary school in addition to information about local secondary schools. You are entitled to select a special or mainstream school for your child.
Further information may be obtained from principals of the special schools or special developmental schools, student support services officers (psychologists), or from the Senior Disabilities and Student Wellbeing Officer, North–Western Victoria Region, on 9488 9488.

4. INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOLS

Information about the location, contact people, transport routes, curriculum, welfare and discipline policies, dress code, and extra curricula activities for local secondary schools can be found on the school’s website or by contacting the school.

Other useful websites include:
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority State Register: http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/StateRegister/Search.aspx/Search?SearchType=0 (a copy of each school’s Victorian Government School Performance Summary can be found on this site)
- My School: http://www.myschool.edu.au

5. PLACEMENT APPEAL PROCESS

If after the initial allocation you wish to review the secondary school’s placement decision, write to the chair of the appeals panel. The letter should state the grounds on which the review is being sought based on the criteria listed in Section 1 Neighbourhood School Policy (above).

In exceptional circumstances, students may be enrolled on compassionate grounds by the secondary school where there are significant family or individual circumstances.

All secondary schools provide a core curriculum based on the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). Commencing a particular language other than English at Year 7 does not constitute specific curriculum grounds. Evidence would be required to establish significant prior study in the chosen language.

If a review by the secondary school is unsuccessful, you may lodge an appeal with The Bendigo Secondary Schools Placement Panel, DET, North–Western Victoria Region, (PO Box 442, Bendigo 3552) by 11th June.

6. STUDENT TRANSPORT

Enquiries about bus transport and travel support should be directed to the secondary school principal and will be considered in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development policy regarding eligibility.

Parents who choose a special or special developmental school should clarify with the relevant principal details regarding the availability of and eligibility requirements for bus transport.

7. APPLYING FOR NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

If you are sure that you already have a place for your child in a non-government secondary school, complete only sections 2, 3 and 4 of the Application for Placement form, sign it and return it in the reply paid envelope enclosed.

If you have applied for a place in a non-government school, but have not yet been told that your child has been granted a place, you should safeguard your child’s interests by also applying for a place in a government secondary school.

If your child is granted a place in a non-government school after being allocated a position in a government secondary school, you are asked to notify the government secondary school immediately.