

# Mansfield Autism Statewide Services

## Service Access Policy and Procedures

<b>AA1</b>	<b>Accessible and Affordable</b>	<b>Service Access Policy and Procedures</b>
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<b>What this policy aims to do</b>	<p>This policy is to ensure that all persons wishing to access MASS services are treated fairly and equitably while also enabling those with autism to access services and supports that are right for them. The policy provides direction to staff to promote consistency in the process of accessing services.</p>
<b>Who this policy applies to</b>	<p>All clients and their families who access our services. All staff responsible for service access</p>
<b>Who is responsible for carrying out this policy</b>	<p>MASS staff responsible for receiving and assessing service referrals.</p>
<b>What words used in this policy mean</b>	<p>The Act means the Disability Act 2006</p> <p>Access is the process through which a client enters into a service agreement with MASS</p> <p>Schedule of Support sets out the services that the client wishes to access from MASS and how they will pay for the services</p> <p>Service Agreement sets out the responsibilities of the provider and the client in agreeing to service. This includes cancellations, feedback, complaints and communication.</p> <p>Enrolment Agreement (Education services) means the Agreement forming part of these Enrolment Terms and Conditions by which the Applicant agrees to be bound.</p> <p>Application for Enrolment (Education services) means the Enrolment Application Form the Applicant will need to complete as a condition of enrolment.</p> <p>Conditions of Enrolment (Education services) means these Enrolment Terms and Conditions including any subsequent amendments made by The School.</p>

	<p>Student means the student named in the Enrolment Agreement.</p> <p>CEO means the Chief Executive Officer, or the CEO's authorised representative.</p> <p>"the School" means Mansfield Autism Statewide Services – Mansfield Campus and Dookie Campus (ABN 14 006 171 580)</p> <p>The enrolment register is a permanent record of the students admitted to the school.</p>
<b>Legislation this policy is based on</b>	<p>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Services Act 1986 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)</p> <p>National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)</p> <p>National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and other measures) Bill 2017 (Cth)</p> <p>National Standards for Disability Services 2014 (Cth)</p> <p>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</p> <p>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</p> <p>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Act 2006 (VIC)</p> <p>Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)</p> <p>NDIS Practice Standards for Disability Services</p> <p>Victorian Human Services Standards</p> <p>Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)</p> <p>Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic.)</p> <p>Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards</p> <p>Equal Opportunity Act (Vic.) 2010</p> <p>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth.)</p> <p>Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth.)</p> <p>Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth.)</p> <p>Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth.)</p> <p>Education and Training Reform Act (2017)</p>
<b>Other relevant policies</b>	<p>HS7 Privacy and Information Sharing</p> <p>A1 Client Rights and Responsibilities</p> <p>HS13 Duty of Care</p> <p>HS11 Client Feedback</p> <p>HS12 Incident Management</p>

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# SERVICE ACCESS POLICY

Mansfield Autism provides a range of services for individuals and families living with autism. MASS services and supports recognise that people with a disability have the same right as other members of the community to participate actively in the decisions that affect their lives and be provided the information and support necessary to enable this to occur.

The following principles underpin our services:

- To provide a service that is **fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory**.
- Promote **dignity** and **respect for privacy** for all clients accessing MASS services.
- To be **person centred, flexible and responsive** to the individual needs and goals of people with autism.
- Maximise the **choice, participation, inclusion, and independence** of people with autism.
- Acknowledge the important role **families** have in supporting people with autism.
- Preserve and promote **healthy relationships** amongst families.
- Respect **cultural diversity, values, and beliefs**.
- Provide information that is **clear, concise, and transparent** so potential clients can make an informed choice on services.
- To **communicate** in a mode that best suits the individual.
- Have regard for any potentially increased disadvantage which may be experienced by persons with a disability because of their gender, language, cultural or indigenous background, or location.

MASS ensures that all clients wishing to access any of its services are treated **in a manner that is fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory including** in relation to gender, age, race, culture, religion, sexual preference and disability which is consistent with human rights and legislative framework.

MASS will ensure that:

1. Where an autistic person or a person on their behalf has made a request for MASS services, information is gathered to determine:
  - the appropriateness of MASS to provide support
  - the needs of the person and the types of supports required
  - if a person is considered a priority for access
  - If a person has made a request on behalf of a person with autism, then MASS will ensure, where appropriate, that the person with autism agrees to the request
  - health, wellbeing, safety, and security for all clients

# SERVICE ACCESS POLICY

2. Entry criteria to all MASS services, supports and educational facilities will be:
  - Transparent and freely available online and in print.
  - Will include specific eligibility criteria and associated costs.
  - Service descriptions will be clearly outlined to help users make an informed choice.
3. The information is communicated to each client using the language, mode of communication and terms the client is most likely to understand.
4. Reasonable adjustment to the support delivery environment is made and monitored to ensure it is fit for purpose and each client's health, privacy, dignity, quality of life and independence are supported.
5. Each client is supported to understand what circumstances supports can be withdrawn.
6. MASS feedback and complaints system is accessible to all and information how to make a complaint is provided to all clients.
7. When service is refused, families will be provided with reasons that are specific to the entry criteria of the program, support, or educational facility. MASS will provide the individual or family with information about why it made that decision, the process to have the decision reviewed or appealed and contact details for other relevant services both within MASS and external agencies.
8. Services are culturally sensitive and respond appropriately to the diversity of needs of the community and those accessing services.
9. MASS will provide information on the services and supports it can provide and the terms for providing them, prior to commencement of service. These are provided in the form of a schedule of support and service agreement (NDIS).
10. For NDIS services the **Service Agreement and Schedule of Support** are signed by the client prior to service
11. Each client accesses the most appropriate supports that meet their needs, goals, and preferences.
12. If there are limited availability of spaces for the requested service, then families will be notified and placed on a wait list. The wait list will be reviewed regularly, and families contacted when places become available.
13. Where MASS services have a limited capacity, availability of service may consider:
  - a. Age of client
  - b. Availability of specific resources to deliver quality service
  - c. Assessed needs
  - d. Funding available to achieve goals
  - e. Severity of situation, including safety

# SERVICE ACCESS POLICY

## Specific Program Entry Criteria

- MAPs: all Victorian clients, ages 0 – 18 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available).
- Therapeutic Residential Placement: 6 – 16 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available)
- Respite: 6 – 18 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available)
- Family Camps: 3 – 18 years. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available).
- Local Programs: Local to Mansfield. All ages. Fees Apply (NDIS Funding available)
- Adult Services: Limited capacity. 18 years +
- Mansfield Campus Day Students: up to age 18 years. Fees Apply (No Funding available for families).

## Service Exit (Client)

An individual may leave MASS for several reasons, including but not limited to:

- Relocation to an area outside of service delivery
- Where the schedule of support and service agreement is no longer able to meet the person's needs or assist in achieving the person's goals
- Transfer to another service provider
- The death of a person using the service
- Exercising a person's individual choice and control

As per MASS Service Agreement all NDIS clients are required to provide four (4) weeks' notice of intention to exit, in writing.

For withdrawal of students from our education services we would appreciate at least four (4) weeks' notice. We are a small school and this helps to support planning and staff allocations. MASS needs to be made aware if the student has enrolled in another school, is being home schooled or is exempt from enrolling at school before removing student from enrolment register.

On exit, to support a client to transition to another provider, clients may request copies of any reports and / or behaviour support plans if not already provided. MASS will approve the incoming implementing provider access, on request, to the RIDS BSP as per RIDS requirements.

## Service Exit (MASS)

MASS reserves the right to withdraw services in situations where:

- its duty of care to other clients, families or staff is demonstrably compromised.
- Continued non-payment of service delivery fees incurred during service.
- There has been no contact from the client over the scheduled delivery times.

## SERVICE ACCESS POLICY

Under normal circumstances, withdrawal of service by MASS would only be contemplated where there are serious risks posed by the service placement to the duty of care to other clients, staff or the community and reasonable efforts to rectify the issues have been made and shown to have failed.

If efforts to sustain the place are unsuccessful, MASS must arrange a meeting with the individual, family and/or any support people or advocates they nominate to discuss the decision. MASS should also discuss issues with relevant funding authorities.

These meetings may produce further agreed strategies to attempt to consolidate the service. If these also are unsuccessful, MASS will write to the client, family and advocates outlining the reasons behind the decision and advising them of their rights under MASS' policy on complaints and disputes (including providing contact details for advocacy organisations and the Disability Services Commissioner). See HS11 Client Feedback Policy.

All clients exiting the service will be exited in a professional, planned, and collaborative manner. Where needed the client will be supported in the referrals to other services that could offer supports or services to meet the client's needs.

- Where a service agreement has ceased, and MASS no longer delivers service. MASS will exit clients from our 'active' database in MARS to 'inactive'.
- All information regarding the client will be retained, secured, and stored according to our privacy policy.



# SERVICE ACCESS PROCEDURES

## Client Service Access: External Process



### STEP 1

#### EXPRESSION OF INTEREST.

Clients provide contact details through the Expression of Interest form on the website. Clients indicate which services they are interested in.

### STEP 2

#### REFERRAL FORM.

Clients / Parents or Guardians are emailed the Referral form to complete when service has availability. Clients complete the referral form and return a copy of the autism diagnosis.

### STEP 3

#### PHONE CALL AND ACCESS INTERVIEW.

The service manager completes the Pre-Visit Risk Assessment and organises the Access Interview. The Access Interview may be in the family home, over the phone or in the education settings.

### STEP 4

#### SERVICE AGREEMENT SIGNED.

A Service Agreement and Schedule of Support is signed for NDIS services. Enrolment form and Enrolment Agreement signed for education services.

### STEP 5

#### SERVICE STARTS.

Staff will be in touch to arrange service dates.

Figure 1 Flow Chart of Access Process: Client

# SERVICE ACCESS PROCEDURES

## New Client Service Access: Internal Procedures

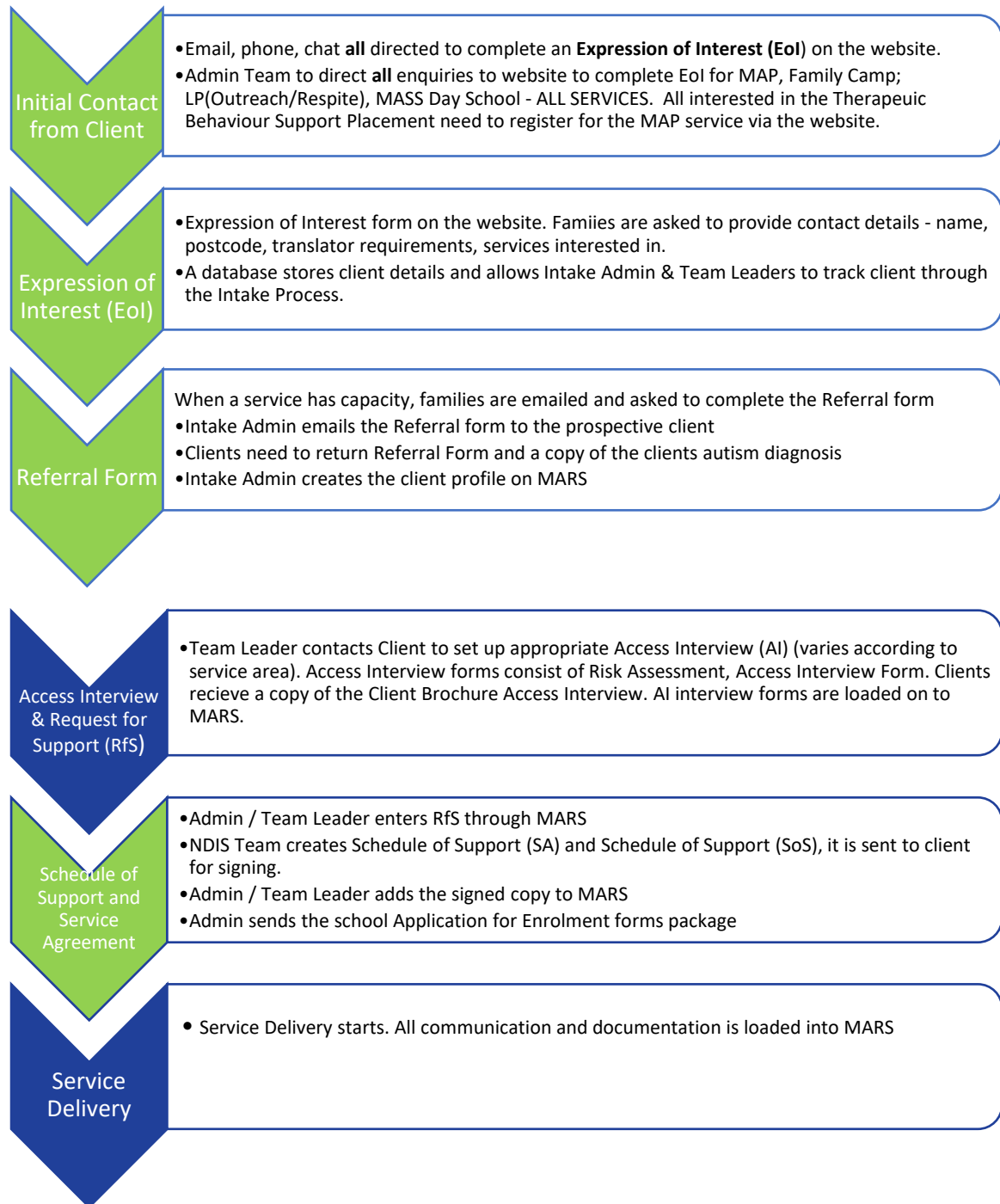


Figure 2 - Flow Chart of Access Process: Internal Processes

- Tasks to be completed by Admin / Intake to complete administration for new clients
- Contacts to be completed by Team Leaders and Coordinators

# SERVICE ACCESS PROCEDURES

## Expression of Interest

All families are directed to the website to enter their contact details and the service that they are interested in receiving.

## Referral Form & Autism Diagnosis

If there is space available, the Intake Admin team member emails the potential client a referral form to complete. The person completing the referral form provides a copy of the young person's autism diagnosis. Once the referral form and autism diagnosis are received, the Intake Admin enters the client's details into MARS and communicates with the Team Leader that the client is ready for an Access Interview.

## Phone Pre-access risk assessment and Access Interview schedule

Team Leaders phone client and complete a Pre-Access Visit risk assessment by phone. Team Leaders then arrange an Access Interview.

## Initial Access Interview

Team Leader visits the family home to conduct an **Initial Access Interview**.

The **Initial Access Interview** ensures that:

- It is appropriate for MASS to provide support – the Initial Access Interview gathers relevant background information and needs, supports and goals of the client.
- The Initial Access Interview gathers appropriate information regarding restrictive practices and reporting requirements for the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.
- The client is provided with an overview of the types of services and supports available for the client, in a format accessible and appropriate to the client
- If a person has made a request on behalf of a person with autism, then MASS will ensure, where appropriate, that the person with autism agrees to the request (adult services).
- A risk assessment is completed as part of the Initial Access Visit and adjustments to service are made for the health and safety of clients.
- Clients are provided with the MASS Information Booklet (All Services) or MASS Day School Parent Carer Information Booklet (Education).
- Reasonable adjustments are made to the delivery of supports ensure it is fit for purpose and each client's health, privacy, dignity, quality of life and independence is supported.

# SERVICE ACCESS PROCEDURES

## Risk Assessment process (refer to Guidelines for using the MASS Client Risk Assessment Tool)



- The process of risk assessment is initiated during the Service Access interview where the Team Leader analyses available information about the client, family and environment that will impact on service delivery and adjusts services and supports to address the risk.
- Example: a client coming for a Residential Behaviour Support Placement with Epilepsy and staff receive specific training for the client.
- Example: a client has behaviours of absconding; short term strategies are discussed, and a behaviour support plan is written and implemented
- Risks are identified with the client and / or family during Access Interview. Risks are categorised as:
- Behaviour -Aggressive behaviour (AB), Fire Lighting (FL), Wandering (W), Absconding (A), Dangerous Climbing (DC), Self-Harm (SH), Suicidal Behaviour

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(SB), Sexualised Behaviour (SXB), Other risk concern (O), Physical safety of staff (S)

- Medical: Health / Medical (Anaphylaxis, Allergies, Asthma, Diabetes, Epilepsy)
- Community: Road safety, Swimming, Stranger Danger, Animals
- Other: Family relationships, family mental health
- The level of risk is determined. The Initial Access visit Team Leader will identify any initial risks to the client, staff or risk of service delivery, and tailor the service, support and intervention accordingly. If any risks are deemed to be extreme risk, the planned action is to be approved by CEO.
- All stakeholders are given the information on risks, planned strategies and response
- All risks are reviewed in client care team meetings, together with relevant incidents and feedback as part of the ongoing service delivery.

## Service Agreement and Schedule of Support

The Team Leader of Access and Intake will contact the NDIS Team with a service request. The NDIS Team provide a **Service Agreement and Schedule of Support** for all NDIS clients (approx. time 2 weeks). This allows the client time to make an informed decision.

The Service Agreement and Schedule of Support is to be signed **before** a client begins receiving the agreed service/s.

- If a person making an application requires support or **advocacy**, MASS will provide contact details for relevant services, including the Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (1800 655 570) and the Victorian Disability Advocacy Council (03 9208 3025), and support them to make contact where possible
- MASS will **maintain a record** of all people who have been referred or applied to MASS and denied a service, summarising reasons for ineligibility. MASS will make these comments in client notes in MARS.

## Existing Clients – All Services

All clients may be referred internally to other MASS services. MAP's may refer clients to a Therapeutic Behaviour Support Residential Placement, Family Camp, Outreach or Respite. When this occurs the Team Leader needs to ensure the appropriate requests/approvals are completed or updated, as required.

For example: a client attending a Family Camp may then request the MAP service. The Team Leader will then need to complete the appropriate risk assessments and visit the home before service scheduling and delivery.

# SERVICE ACCESS PROCEDURES

## Permanent Care

Out of Home Care is provided by special arrangement with DFFH Child Protection. All enquiries are handled by the CEO and places are limited.

## Mansfield Campus Day School and Dookie Campus - Additional Education Enrolment Procedures

Those enrolling in the Day Programs at MASS Campus and Dookie are offered a position at Dookie or MASS Campus and sent the Application for Enrolment form, Consent Forms and Service Agreement forms. It is important to also request copies of the students current individual learning plan, allied health and any other documentation to help support funding applications.

As required by the VRQA Minimum Standards and ACARA Data Collection the **Application for Enrolment at our education services** need to contain:

- Student Contact Details (name, age, address)
- Student Background Characteristics Data (Australian Education Act 2013(Cth) schools are required to collect and report data to VCAA or other testing agency when requested (refer to ACARA Data Collection Manual)
- Parent Background Characteristics (Occupation etc – refer to ACARA Data Collection manual)
- Student Proof of Age and Enrolment Name (birth certificate / passport)
- Immunisation Record (By law, primary schools are required to request and record information on the immunisation status of students prior to enrolment. It is also recommended that schools record immunisation details of secondary school students. Parents or guardians must provide an immunisation status certificate to the school regardless of whether the child is or is not immunised.
- Medical History and medical information including management plans (allergy, asthma and epilepsy)

As required by the VRQA Minimum Standards, all applicants need to be provided with an **Enrolment Agreement**. An enrolment agreement is the contract for services between the school and the parent(s) and which the school and all parents must enter when enrolling their child(ren) in school. The enrolment agreement is a legal contract for services between the school and the parent. The terms and conditions contained within the contract set out the rights and responsibilities of each party to the contract.

# SERVICE ACCESS PROCEDURES

Legislative privacy requirements<sup>2</sup> govern how **personal, sensitive and health** information must be collected, used, disclosed and stored as part of the enrolment process. A **privacy notice** must be provided with the **Application for Enrolment** form explaining to parents and students why this information is being collected, what it is used for, where it might be disclosed and how they can access information held about them. The enrolment agreement should refer to the **Privacy Policy**.

The enrolment agreement needs to be publicly available and must include as a minimum:

- I. **codes of conduct for students and parents** which set out expectations of behaviour and engagement
- II. detailed information about **fees** including additional charges, how fees are collected, how fee levels are changed, processes for managing the non-payment of fees, etc.
- III. **educational services** provided
- IV. the grounds on which the **agreement may be terminated**.

The enrolment agreement is separate from the admissions policy and from the enrolment application form. As the legal contract between the school and the parent, the enrolment agreement also serves a different function from that of a more general marketing prospectus and parent handbook. These documents should be published as separate documents.

## MASS Education Enrolment Paperwork

- Application for Enrolment
- Enrolment Agreement (includes Privacy Statement)
- Fee Schedule
- Parent and Student Code of Conduct
- Medication Paperwork
- Annual re-enrolment form to check details and confirm enrolment for the year

## Enrolment Record

Once a student has been offered a place, MASS maintains an enrolment register (MARS). MASS Administration will send new enrolment forms each year to ensure that the register is up to date. The enrolment register determines those students for whom

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**attendance** must be registered and monitored. Students' details are loaded into the client management system.

The client management system is updated and accurate records maintained regarding:

<b>Maintaining Accurate Records</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Student's name, age and address</b>	Administration, Teacher or Team Leader to update MARS when the new details are provided. An annual re-enrolment form is sent to all students, asking them to check the contact details that are on file for that student and to update any details that have changed.
<b>The name and contact details of any parent of guardian of the student</b>	Administration, Teacher or Team Leader will update MARS
<b>The date of enrolment of the student</b>	Team Leader – Intake will make a note in MARS Client Notes
<b>The Victorian student number allocated to the student</b>	Administration will record in MARS with enrolment paperwork
<b>The date the student ceased to be enrolled at the school (if applicable) and the destination of the student.</b>	Team Leader will make a note in MARS Client Notes

Student enrolment records must be retained for 7 years after end of school year in which the last entry was made (Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth)).

Records of enrolment are required for annual data returns to the Australian Government for the Australian Government Census of Non-Government Schools<sup>3</sup> under Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth.) (s.77). They are also required for annual data returns to the Victorian Government for the Victorian Census under the Victorian Government Funding Agreement for Non-Government Schools.

## **Annual Report**

The **Annual Report to the School Community** must include a report on the characteristics of students at the school.



# SERVICE ACCESS PROCEDURES

## Ceasing Enrolment

A student must not be removed from the school register unless the CEO is aware that the:

- Student has enrolled in another school (in any state);
- Student is home schooled;
- Student is exempt from enrolling at school;
- Basis for cancelling the enrolment is that the School has been provided with false information or not advised that this information is out of date.
- The Minister for Education has authorised removal on the grounds that the whereabouts of the student is unknown.
- The CEO must not cancel a student's enrolment without first:
- Giving written notice of the proposed cancellation, and reason for it, to the parents or guardian or students (if over 17); and
- Giving reasonable opportunity to show why the enrolment should not be cancelled.

Students will be made inactive in MARS once enrolment has ceased.