

# Year 6 to Year 7 Transition: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## 1. Where can schools find information on the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on this year's transition process?

Please see **pages 3-4** for more information. The SPAG Transition Year 6 to 7 webpage also contains information:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/transition.aspx>

## 2. Can secondary school staff contact prospective families directly to verify address information, prior to a Year 7 placement offer being made?

No. Prior to a Year 7 placement offer being made on Wednesday 19 August 2020, all communication regarding the validity of a Year 6 student's permanent residential address, or other questions pertaining to information on the Application for Year 7 Placement 2021 form, should be directed to staff at the student's primary school and should remain confidential.

### **Designated neighbourhood schools and school zones**

## 3. What is the legislation that gives children the right to enrol in their designated neighbourhood school?

Children of compulsory school age are guaranteed the right to enrol in their local school by the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#), specifically S 2.2.13 (1), which states, "A child of compulsory school age is entitled to be enrolled at his or her designated neighbourhood Government school."

Designated neighbourhood schools can be identified online at [www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au](http://www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au)

## 4. How does the Department determine the designated neighbourhood school for a Year 6 student?

The designated neighbourhood school is generally the school within closest proximity to the student's permanent residential address.

In Melbourne metropolitan areas, Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong, the nearest school is measured in a straight line from the student's permanent residence. In any other areas of Victoria, the nearest school is measured by the shortest practical route from the student's permanent residence. For schools with multiple campuses, it is the campus within closest proximity to the student's permanent residential address.

Designated neighbourhood schools can be identified online at [www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au](http://www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au)

Primary schools seeking advice about school zones are advised to contact their regional office. Key contacts are provided at the end of this pack.

## 5. Do school zones change?

The Department reviews school zones on an annual basis and these are published in Term 1.

Zones may be adjusted to reflect new schools, changing provision at existing schools or to address changing demand and demographics of the local population. Most zones do not change.

[Findmyschool.vic.gov.au](http://Findmyschool.vic.gov.au) shows school zones for the current year (2020) and the next school year (2021).

Individual schools that have had zone changes have been notified by the Department.

## 6. Do students have to enrol in their designated neighbourhood secondary school?

No. Families can apply to a different secondary school; however, the priority order of placement will determine whether the application is accepted.

To read the priority order of placement, see: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/placement.aspx>

## 7. What changes have been made to the Department's Placement Policy?

The Placement Policy continues to prioritise children and young people living within the school zone and the siblings of students already attending the school. This has not changed.

Guidance material now makes it clear that a sibling relationship is defined to reflect modern family living arrangements. This includes younger and older siblings. A sibling can be defined to broadly include step-siblings residing together at the same permanent address and students residing together at the same permanent address as part of statutory out-of-home care arrangements, including foster care, kinship care and permanent care.

Enrolment on sibling grounds may also be considered for students permanently residing together in the one residence as part of multiple family cohabitation. Students seeking enrolment on sibling grounds must be residing together at the same permanent address and must be attending the school at the same time.

The Department also recognises there may be some situations where, due to exceptional circumstances, a student may be unable to enrol in their designated neighbourhood school, or it may not be in the student's best interests to enrol in their designated neighbourhood school. In these exceptional circumstances, enrolment at another school may be sought on compassionate grounds.

Parents/carers with children living outside a school's zone still have the choice to request enrolment at their preferred government school. If the school has sufficient capacity, the enrolment can be accepted.

This is consistent with current legislation and policy. The Department always seeks to ensure the policy is applied consistently across the state.

For more information, see: [Placement Policy](#)

## 8. What are 'compassionate grounds' and how are they assessed?

In exceptional circumstances, compassionate grounds are where a student is unable to enrol in their designated neighbourhood school, or, is not

in the student's best interest to enrol at their designated neighbourhood Government school.

Parents/carers must be able to clearly demonstrate the exceptional circumstances which they believe make an enrolment at the designated neighbourhood school unsuitable for their child (for example, family violence or specific wellbeing, safety, physical health and/or mental health concerns).

Each application will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, and additional information may be required to support the application.

For more information, see: [Placement Policy](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

## 9. What evidence may families be asked to provide if making an appeal on compassionate grounds?

When making an appeal on compassionate grounds, schools and regions can request that families provide further evidence to support their application, including, but not limited to:

- legal documentation;
- reports from allied health and/or medical professionals, Department of Health and Human Services Practitioners, Victoria Police, family violence services, court orders, etc.

For more information, see: [Schools' Privacy Policy](#) here:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/privacypolicy.aspx>

## 10. What is the Priority Order of Placement?

In circumstances when a school may not be able to accept all applications due to existing or future capacity concerns, schools must manage enrolment applications in accordance with the following priority order:

1. Students for whom the school is the designated neighbourhood school.
2. Students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time.
3. Where the Regional Director has restricted the enrolment, students who reside nearest the school.

4. Students seeking enrolment on specific curriculum grounds.
5. All other students in order of closeness of their home to the school.

In exceptional circumstances, a student may be enrolled in a school based on compassionate grounds. **This is an overarching consideration** and does not form part of the priority order of placement.

### **11. Does a school have to enrol all out of zone siblings?**

There is an expectation that schools will enrol all out of zone siblings, unless otherwise agreed with the Regional Director that admissions for siblings should be limited due to significant future or current capacity restraints (e.g. there is a concern that students within zone could not be accommodated in present or future years).

Any agreements between Schools and the Regional Director on enrolment restrictions for out of zone siblings must be reviewed annually, with schools required to initiate contact in the first instance.

Principals should contact their relevant Regional Director to discuss their eligibility to restrict out of zone sibling enrolments.

### ***The Application for Year 7 Placement 2021 form (the Application form)***

### **12. Who should be the first point of contact for parent/carer enquiries about the Year 6 to Year 7 transition process?**

The Year 6 Coordinator, Transition Coordinator or Principal at each primary school can help parents/carers of Year 6 students with any questions they may have about the transition process.

### **13. How should international fee-paying students in a primary school apply for placement in Year 7?**

International Fee-paying students can apply for enrolment in a government school at [www.study.vic.gov.au](http://www.study.vic.gov.au) or apply directly to non-government (independent or Catholic) schools.

### **14. How do students in non-government schools (Catholic or independent) or students currently undertaking home schooling apply for a Year 7 placement at government schools?**

Some Catholic and independent primary schools may choose to assist their families in the Year 6-7 transition process and may take the same roles and responsibilities as government primary schools.

Alternatively, parents/carers of Year 6 students who are at non-government primary schools may approach secondary schools directly for a copy of the Application for Year 7 Placement form.

Parents/carers may also download the Non-government Parent Pack from <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/going-to-school/Pages/year-6-to-7.aspx>

Parents/carers can then **submit** a completed Application form **directly** to their preferred secondary school. These applications are considered based on the Placement Policy's priority order of placement.

Who may sign the Application form?  
Where practicable, all parents with parental responsibility for a child should sign and submit a single Application for Year 7 Placement 2021 form.

For the purposes of this form, a parent includes any person who has parental responsibility for the child including by way of Court order or parenting plan, a guardian for adult students, and an informal carer of the child under an Informal Carer Statutory Declaration. For further information, see: [education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spaq/safety/Pages/parentalresponsibility.aspx](http://education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spaq/safety/Pages/parentalresponsibility.aspx)

Where it is not practicable or possible for parents to sign a single form, they should communicate this to the primary school who will allow more than one application form to be completed and submitted by each parent.

These applications will be treated as separate applications. If the student is offered two placements at different schools, the parents are expected to reach an agreement about which

placement to accept in the best interests of the student.

If parents/carers have difficulty reaching agreement, it is recommended the dispute be resolved through discussion, attendance at the Family Relationship Centre or at Court. It is not the responsibility of the Department, or the schools, to assist with this decision-making process.

If there is a parental dispute regarding school preferences and a place at each of the preferred schools is available, the student can be accepted into both schools pending agreement between the parents.

For more information see:

[education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/parentalresponsibility.aspx](http://education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/parentalresponsibility.aspx)

**15. Do parents/carers need to complete the Application form if their child is attending a government school that continues from Year 6 to Year 7 at the same school?**

No. If a Year 6 student is continuing at the same school (such as a Prep to Year 12, Prep to Year 9, or Prep to Year 10 school), a Year 7 Placement form does not need to be completed.

An Application form needs to be completed for each student seeking a placement in *another* school.

If a student attends a school which offers both Year 6 and Year 7 but is seeking an enrolment in a *different* school for Year 7 in 2021, the Application form needs to be completed and the school must manage the process in accordance with the statewide procedures and timeline.

**16. Are parents/carers required to complete an Application form if they have a place in a non-government school or are registered for home schooling in 2021?**

Yes, all families with students enrolled in *government* schools are required to complete and return an Application form, even if a student has been offered a place in a non-government school or are registered for home schooling in 2021 (unless the student is continuing at the same school as outlined in question 16).

This is to ensure the student's primary school is able to maintain accurate records in accounting for all students Year 7 placements for 2021.

Where a Year 7 placement in a non-government school has been confirmed and accepted, or an application to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) for home schooling has been approved, families are not required complete Section 4 of the Application form.

**17. Do parents/carers need to identify three preferences if their first preference is their designated neighbourhood school?**

No. It is sufficient to identify one preference if that school is the student's designated neighbourhood school.

**18. What happens if a student does not receive a place in their preferred school, or schools?**

The student will be allocated to their designated neighbourhood school.

**19. What happens if a parent/carer does not return the Application form?**

Primary school staff should take steps to contact the parent/carer if no Application form is submitted. Staff should document the reasonable steps they took to give parents/carers the opportunity to submit the Application form.

The student's name should be added to the Summary of Placement Requests list with a clear note that the Application form has not been returned. The primary school must inform the parent/carer that their child's name has been included in the Year 7 placement requests for the designated neighbourhood school.

The student will be allocated to their designated neighbourhood school.

**20. If a child has two permanent addresses, how is the designated neighbourhood school decided?**

If a student resides at multiple addresses, their 'permanent residence' is the address at which the student spends the majority of their weekdays.



If the student spends an equal amount of time at two addresses, both addresses will be considered as their permanent address and they will be entitled to enrol in either one of the designated neighbourhood schools for both addresses.

For more information about the determining permanent residence, please see:  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/placement.aspx>

### **21. If a child has no permanent address, how is the designated neighbourhood school decided?**

In this instance, primary schools are advised to contact their regional office for advice. Key contacts are provided at the end of this pack.

### **22. Can parents/carers change their secondary school preference/preferences after they have returned their Application form to their primary school, but before an offer has been made?**

Yes, parents/carers can change their secondary school preference/preferences after they have returned their Application form to their primary school.

Where a family's circumstances have changed, the primary school should facilitate any necessary changes to the secondary school preference/s, particularly if the circumstances result in a change of designated neighbourhood school.

### **23. What happens if, prior to the end of the 2020 school year, a parent/carer changes their mind after they have accepted their child's Year 7 placement offer?**

A parent/carer must notify their child's primary school as soon as is practicable.

Primary schools must then facilitate the new placement request and provide updated advice to the relevant secondary school/s. The secondary school/s should provide a response as early as possible.

### **24. What if a parent/carer does not wish to accept their child's Year 7 placement offer when they are notified on 19 August 2020?**

In this instance, parents/carers should advise their child's primary school, and the allocated secondary school, of their wishes as soon as possible. Primary schools must advise parents that it is the law for their child to be enrolled in a school, or registered for home schooling, if they are between the ages of six and 17.

Parents/carers should be advised that they can appeal to their preferred secondary school by the closing date of **31 August 2020**.

### ***Changes to a student's address details***

### **25. What happens if a student's address changes between the placement offer being made in August 2020 and the first day of Year 7 in 2021?**

If, after a placement offer is made to the student, the student's permanent residence changes or it comes to light that the address provided on the Application form was not the student's genuine permanent residence, a school may *only* withdraw a placement offer in the following circumstances:

- where, after the priority order of placement is applied to the correct address, a place is not available for the student; **and**
- the new address is not within the designated neighbourhood area for the school; **and**
- the placement offer and any subsequent material provided to the student and their parent/carer expressly states that the offer may be withdrawn prior to the first day of attendance if the student's permanent place of residence changes or the school becomes aware that the address provided on the *Application for Year 7 Placement* form was not the genuine permanent residence for the student.

If these circumstances occur, prior to withdrawing a placement offer, secondary school staff should consider any safety or wellbeing issues that may

affect the student as a result of the offer being rescinded. School staff should consult with the relevant regional office or the Department's Legal Division.

If such situations occur, in addition to notifying the student's parent/carer in writing, secondary school staff must also notify the student's primary school in writing.

Primary school staff must then work with the family's new designated neighbourhood secondary school, or preferred secondary school, to ensure the student has a confirmed placement for Year 7 in 2021.

### **Placement appeals**

#### **26. What is the process for parents/carers appealing against a Year 7 placement decision to the preferred secondary school?**

Any appeal against a government secondary school's decision not to provide a Year 7 placement, must first be lodged by the parent/carer with the preferred secondary school, in writing using the **Year 6 to Year 7 Transition Placement Appeal form**, by **Monday 31 August 2020**, where it will be considered by the school's placement committee and/or Principal.

To assist families in this process, their appeal may be lodged using the **Year 6 to Year 7 Transition Placement Appeal form** which can be found at the end of this Pack.

Parents/carers must be notified in writing of the outcome of this appeal by **Friday 11 September 2020**.

#### **27. How do parents/carers obtain a copy of the Year 6 to Year 7 Transition Placement Appeal form?**

When notifying families of their child's Year 7 placement at a school which is not their first preference, the student's **primary school** is asked to provide parents/carers with a copy of the Appeal form along with their placement letter. The Appeal form can be found at the end of this Pack.

#### **28. What happens if a parent/carers' appeal to their preferred secondary school is unsuccessful?**

In these circumstances, a further written appeal against a school's decision can be lodged by parents/carers to the relevant Department of Education Regional Director by **Friday 25 September 2020**.

Placement appeals to the Regional Director are considered based on the priority order of placement, and in exceptional circumstances, compassionate grounds.

Parents/carers will be advised, in writing, of the outcome of the appeal by **Friday 30 October 2020**. The outcome of this appeal **concludes** the appeals process.

#### **29. Should primary school staff provide letters of recommendation to parents/carers to support their child's placement appeal?**

No, primary school staff should not provide recommendation letters to families to support their placement appeals.

Placement appeals are considered based on the priority order of placement, and in exceptional circumstances, compassionate grounds.

Schools and regions can request that parents/carers seeking a placement on compassionate grounds provide further evidence to support their appeal.

#### **30. Can a parent/carer lodge an appeal to the Department's Regional Director after the closing date of Friday 25 September 2020?**

This date is set to ensure all Year 6 students have the opportunity to participate in the Year 7 Orientation Day on Tuesday 8 December 2020, which is a vital step in a student's successful transition to secondary school.

Any appeals received after this date will be considered at the discretion of the Regional Director **and may not be accepted**.

Parents/carers wishing to lodge an appeal after the closing date should contact their regional office for advice.

## ***Student Data Transfer (SDT)***

### **31. What are the requirements regarding the transfer of student data from a primary school to a secondary school?**

In order to encourage a successful transition from Year 6 to Year 7, schools need to work together and share student information and student data to enable appropriate personal and social supports be put in place to promote student engagement and wellbeing, as well as meeting their legal and duty-of-care obligations.

It is mandatory that primary schools provide a standard minimum set of personal and health data to the destination secondary school via the CASES21 Student Data Transfer process, for all transitioning students.

Personal and health data includes a student's details, achievement data, primary, alternative and additional family information, medical conditions including disabilities, foreseeable risk factors and information relating to the welfare and any legal information.

For more support and information, see the Privacy Notice accompanying the Application for Year 7 Placement 2021 form in the Parent/Carer Pack, and the Student Data Transfer policy:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/transitions/Pages/data.aspx>

### **32. When should the CASES21 data transfer occur in CASES21?**

The CASES21 student data transfer process includes:

- an export of data from the primary school (the transfer) and
- an import of that data from the secondary school

As soon as a Year 7 placement offer is accepted by families:

- the primary schools must transfer the student data and
- the secondary school must Import the student data. This will assist the secondary school with planning for 2021

If the family decides to accept a different secondary placement at a later date, the student data can be re-transferred to the new secondary school at the time that the new placement is accepted. Transferring student information prior to acceptance at the new school is a breach of privacy legislation.

When achievement data for a transferred student is finalised in CASES21 at the end of 2020, it will automatically alert the secondary school to import the data.

For detailed instructions on how to import and export student data, see Chapter 24 of the [CASES21 Administration User Guide](#).

### **33. What are the student data transfer requirements for government primary schools?**

Primary schools must:

- identify all students transferring to secondary schools
- ensure current student information is accurate on CASES21
- ensure that all Student Supports reports and files, which are unable to be sourced from CASES21, are sent separately to the destination secondary school

### **34. What are the student data transfer requirements for secondary schools?**

Once the Year 7 placement has been accepted, secondary schools are required to:

- import student data received from the primary school into CASES21
- generate Student Enrolment Information Form [ST21090] in CASES21 and send to parents/carers to update. No other admission/enrolment form is required
- send any school specific parent permission requests e.g. use of student photo in school communication to parents/carers
- update student data on CASES21 with changes provided by parents/carers.

### 35. What are the SDT requirements in the following scenarios?

*A Year 6 student transitioning from a government primary school to a non-government secondary (Catholic and independent) school*

When a student is transferring to non-government secondary school, the government primary school is required to follow the Manual Exit of a Student instructions in Chapter 12 of the [CASES21 Administration User Guide](#).

A transfer note [ST21026] must be generated from CASES21, including information on any foreseeable risks (if applicable) and sent to the destination secondary school. Primary schools must ensure the enrolment in a non-government school is confirmed.

*A Year 6 student transitioning from a non-government (Catholic and independent) primary school to a government secondary school*

When a student is transferring to a government secondary school from a non-government primary school, the government secondary school is required to follow the Manual Entry instructions Chapter 2 of the [CASES21 Administration User Guide](#). Parents/carers are required to complete a manual Enrolment Form.

*A Year 6 student transitioning from a government primary school to an interstate secondary school*

Primary schools are required to follow the Manual Exit of a Student instructions in Chapter 12 of the [CASES21 Administration User Guide](#) in conjunction with the information found on the [Education Council](#) site. The site contains downloadable forms, protocols and fact sheets.

Schools are required to use the Interstate Student Data Transfer Note (ISDTN) in accordance with the protocols jointly developed and agreed by the Australian Government, State and Territory Education Authorities, the independent and Catholic education sectors through the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood.

*A Year 6 student transitioning from a government primary school to an overseas secondary school*

Schools are required to follow the Manual Exit of a Student instructions in Chapter 12 of the [CASES21 Administration User Guide](#) and choose "Overseas" as the destination school.

If primary and secondary schools require additional information regarding CASES21, see CASES21 Portal, or if school staff have additional queries regarding CASES21, submit a request to [IT Service Gateway](#).

### ***Student transport***

### 36. Who is responsible for advising parents/carers of transportation information?

Each secondary school is expected to provide information regarding school buses and public transport on the school website.

Information should also be provided at school information sessions. The Department's transport provision through the School Bus Program and Procedures sets this out. For more information, see:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/transport/Pages/default.aspx>