

Enrolment 2024 Frequently Asked Questions

This document contains the most frequently asked questions about enrolments and school zones for Victorian government schools including specialist schools.

NOTE: In this document, *your local school* refers to a **designated neighbourhood government school**. Your child has the right to enrol in their local school. This right is set out in the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#) (Vic).

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General information

Who can I contact if I need more information about school zones?

Call the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) hotline on 1800 896 950 or email us at vsba@education.vic.gov.au.

Who can I contact if I need more information about enrolments?

Contact your local school or your [regional office](#).

How can I help someone who cannot speak English find their local school?

Call 1800 338 663 to speak to your regional offices about assistance available.

School zones

Finding your local school and school zone

What is a designated neighbourhood school (referred to as your local school)?

Your designated neighbourhood school (local school) is generally the government school closest to your child's permanent residential address. Each residential address has both a local government primary and secondary school.

All children of compulsory school age have a right to be enrolled at their local school.

How can I find my local school?

All government primary, secondary and specialist schools are presented on the [Find my School](#) website. Type in your home address and the website will then find your local school.

Which schools have a school zone?

All mainstream government primary and secondary schools have a zone. Some campuses of multi-campus schools also have their own school zone.

Schools with different enrolment criteria, such as English Language Schools and Select Entry Schools, do not have a school zone.

Specialist schools (for students with disabilities) do not have school zones but are included on the [Find my School](#) website to support parents and carers make informed decisions about school options.

What is a school zone and how are they determined?

A school zone defines an area's designated neighbourhood government school (local school).

For children residing in metropolitan areas, and in Ballarat, Bendigo or Geelong, their local school is usually the nearest government school in a straight line from the child's permanent address. In any other area of Victoria, it is usually the nearest school by the shortest practical route, recognising the additional travel distances often experienced in regional settings.

Why does Find my School show zones for 2023 and 2024?

School zones are shown for both the 2023 and 2024 school year in case they have been adjusted as part of the department's annual review of zones. When a new school is established, zones for neighbouring schools are adjusted to accommodate the new school.

Note: Most school zones do not change.

Why has my school zone changed between 2023 and 2024?

The department reviews school zones annually. Zones may be adjusted to reflect new schools opening, changing provision at existing schools (e.g., relocating a campus or changing year levels offered), improving school accessibility, or managing enrolment demand.

If your child is already enrolled at a school, they do not need to move schools because the zone has changed.

If my school zone is changing between this year and next year, can I enrol my child at either school?

You may apply to enrol at either school, but your child is only guaranteed a place at their local school for the year you are seeking enrolment.

Why is my local school not in my suburb?

School zones are not defined by suburban boundaries. For further information on how school zones are defined, refer to '[What is a school zone and how are they determined](#)'.

Why am I in a different school zone to my neighbours?

In most instances, school zones are determined based on proximity. This means that you and your neighbour may be closer to different local schools.

What happens if Find my School cannot find or correctly locate my address?

In rare cases, an address may be imprecisely located or matched to an incorrect school zone. You can use the [Find my School](#) website to zoom in and verify that your address has been correctly matched by referring to the property boundary outlined on the map.

The address search function on [Find my School](#) uses your street address to identify the parcel of land which contains your residence. If your unit address doesn't appear on [Find my School](#), your local school is the school designated for the street address.

If you are unable to locate your address, then please contact vsba@education.vic.gov.au.

Why do other mapping websites, such as Google Maps, show that I'm closer to a school that is not my zoned school?

The location point for all government schools is taken from the department's register of school locations. These locations may be different from what is used in other web maps such as Google.

My child will have to cross a significant road to attend their local school. Why doesn't the zone stop at the main road?

The department recognises that some zones need to be aligned with natural geographical and structural barriers such as rivers and freeways, however, a main road is not usually considered to be a barrier to accessing a school.

My property sits across two or more school zones. Which is my local school?

If your property sits across multiple zones or is intersected by a school zone boundary, then your child has the right to attend any of these schools.

Non-standard zones

What is a non-standard zone and why have some schools been given them?

A small number of school zones have been adjusted and are referred to as non-standard zones. These adjustments are designed to improve school accessibility or to manage enrolment demand.

If a non-standard zone is in place, then the zones from surrounding schools are adjusted to ensure that all children are designated a local school.

Other zones and school types

My address is showing multiple school zones on Find my School (e.g., a co-ed and a single sex secondary school zone). Which one is my local school?

In the example provided, both schools are your local school, and your child has the right to attend either school. However, a senior secondary is only available for the year levels the school offers. Single sex schools are not available to all children, just those of a single sex.

Which campus do I attend at a multi-campus school?

Contact the school directly and they will be able to direct you to the right campus for your child. You can see all the campuses on the [Find my School](#) website. In some cases, a campus of a multi-campus school may have its own school zone.

How have school zones for bilingual schools been determined?

Bilingual schools are treated as a local school and have a zone consistent with the standard methodology.

My child's local school is bilingual and half of the school curriculum is in a language other than English. Does my child have to attend this school?

If it is your local school, then your child is guaranteed a place at the school.

If you do not want your child to attend the school, you can request enrolment at your preferred government school. Applications are considered in line with the department's Placement Policy.

Do single-sex schools have school zones?

Most single-sex schools have a school zone.

Zones for single-sex schools are not determined in the same way as other schools, as they do not represent a local school for all children, just a single sex.

Do flexible learning or select entry government schools have a zone?

These two types of government schools do not have school zones.

Flexible learning government schools are an important part of Victoria's education landscape. They provide an alternative offering to students and do not just draw from their local area.

Select entry schools do not have a zone because they are open to all students across the state.

Is there a map of Catholic and independent schools?

For more information on Catholic schools, you can contact the Catholic Education Office or visit: cecv.catholic.edu.au/School-Directory-Search

For independent schools that are members of Independent Schools Victoria you can visit: <https://is.vic.edu.au/>

Enrolment in a government school

General enrolment queries

How do I enrol my child in school?

Contact your local school or any other schools you are considering. Schools provide enrolment information and offer tours.

A school may ask you to complete either an application form or an enrolment form.

The application form requests the information a school needs to prioritise enrolments according to available space.

If a school offers you a place, you will be asked to complete the enrolment form. It is recommended that you only complete an enrolment form for the school your child will attend.

You may be asked to provide proof of address as a condition of your enrolment. Further information about enrolling in school can be found at: [Starting school](#).

What documents do I need to enrol my child in school?

During the enrolment process you will be asked to provide supporting documentation such as your child's birth certificate and Immunisation History Statement.

If you do not have these documents, contact the school for advice and support.

I share custody of my child. How do I enrol them in school?

You must consult with all other adults with parental responsibility when enrolling your child in school, unless it is unsafe to do so. If there are reasons why the other parent should not be contacted, please let the school know. Parents/Carers can co-sign the same form or complete separate forms.

My child has a disability. Can I still enrol them in our local school?

Every student has the right to attend their local school. Students with disability have the same right to enrol in their local school as students without disability. All schools must make reasonable adjustments so that students with disability can learn and achieve on the same basis as other students. You also have the option to seek enrolment for your child at a government specialist school for students with disability.

For more information, see:

- [Disability rights and adjustments in school](#)
- [Starting, attending and leaving school with disability](#)
- [Disability support at school](#)

What if my child is an international student?

International students (such as those holding a dependant or temporary visa) have the legal entitlement to enrol at their designated neighbourhood school.

However, students who hold a subclass 500 student visa in their own name may only attend government schools that accept international students. This means they may not be able to attend their local school.

International students should submit an application at [International Student Program](#) or apply directly to their school of choice if a non-government (Catholic or independent) school.

For more information, see:

- [Victorian Government Schools International Student Program](#)
- [International Student Program](#)

New schools

How do I know about new schools opening in my area?

You can refer to the [VSBA website](#) to see where new schools are opening in 2024. The zones for these schools are available on the [Find my School](#) website.

How do I enrol at a new school opening in 2024?

Visit [VSBA website](#) to find helpful information about new schools opening in 2024. Information will become available progressively during the year, including principal appointments, and when you can attend an information session and how to enrol.

For other questions, contact the [regional office](#) or the VSBA hotline on 1800 896 950.

Placement Policy and priority order of placement

How does a school decide who gets a place?

All children have the right to attend their designated neighbourhood school (known as their local school).

In some cases, a school may not have enough space to enrol all students from outside their zone.

In these cases, schools must manage enrolments using the department's Placement Policy and priority order of placement. This outlines how to prioritise out of zone applications when limited places are available.

The priority order of placement for out of zone enrolments is:

- students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time.
- all other students in order of closeness of their home to the school.

In exceptional circumstances, a student may be enrolled on compassionate grounds. Applications on compassionate grounds are considered on a case-by-case basis. If your circumstances are challenging and your local school is not suitable you should talk to the principal or a Community Liaison Officer in the regional office.

The department's Placement Policy does not apply to schools with specific entry criteria, including Specialist Schools, English Language Schools, Select Entry Schools, or Community Schools.

Does my child have to attend their local school, or can I choose a different school?

You can seek enrolment at schools other than your local school. Applications are considered in line with the department's Placement Policy.

I can see that siblings who do not live in the school zone are prioritised for enrolment. What is considered a sibling?

A sibling is defined to reflect modern family living arrangements. It includes, but is not limited to:

- younger and older siblings.
- stepsiblings living at the same permanent address

- students living at the same permanent address as part of statutory out-of-home care arrangements, including foster care, kinship care and permanent care
- students permanently living together in the one residence as part of multiple family cohabitation.

Students seeking enrolment on sibling grounds should be living together at the same permanent address and must be attending the school at the same time. Where siblings do not live together on a full-time basis, families may still seek enrolment on sibling grounds. These applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Schools can only enrol students who do not live in the school zone if they have sufficient accommodation. How do I know if a school has enough space to accept my child?

Your child is guaranteed a place at their local school, regardless of the school's capacity.

If you are seeking enrolment at another school, you can reach out to the school directly and ask if they are accepting out of zone students. Schools should be able to indicate if they are under enrolment pressure and only able to enrol local students and siblings.

My child attends an early childhood or kindergarten on school grounds. Are they eligible to enrol at the school?

You may seek enrolment any school, however, attendance at a nearby early childhood facility or kindergarten does not guarantee that your child will be offered a place at the school.

Your child is guaranteed a place if they live within the school zone.

If you do not live in the school zone, you still have the choice to request enrolment at your preferred government school. Applications are considered in line with the Placement Policy.

My circumstances are challenging and my local school is not suitable, what should I do?

We understand that not everyone's circumstances are the same, and that there are instances where enrolment on compassionate grounds may need to be considered. If this is the case, you should talk to the principal or a Community Liaison Officer in the [regional office](#).

What evidence do I need to provide if seeking enrolment on compassionate grounds?

You may be asked to provide supporting documentation to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. Supporting documentation may include (but is not limited to):

- legal documentation
- reports from allied health and/or medical professionals, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Practitioners, Victoria Police, family violence services or court orders.

Each application will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and schools will let you know what information is needed.

I want my child to get into an accelerated learning program. Do they need to take an early test?

No, schools may only assess eligibility to participate in accelerated learning programs after you have accepted their placement offer.

Schools are not allowed to run testing before a placement offer has been accepted.

Can I seek placement or enrolment for my child under 'curriculum grounds'?

No, enrolment of out of zone students cannot be prioritised on curriculum grounds. However, schools continue to have the flexibility to focus on particular learning areas depending on the needs and interests of their community.

In instances where a particular subject is not available, flexible learning opportunities can be explored. For example, [Virtual School Victoria](#) allows students to complete subjects not on offer at their school or unavailable due to timetabling clashes.

If my child is not offered a place at a school I have applied for, can I appeal the decision?

Yes, you have the right to appeal a non-placement decision with the school.

First, lodge a written appeal with the school. The school will be able to provide you with a template. Your appeal will be considered by the school's placement committee and/or principal.

If your appeal is unsuccessful and you are not satisfied that the school has correctly applied the Placement Policy or adequately considered your circumstances in the assessment of your appeal, it can be escalated to the relevant Regional Director. To escalate an enrolment appeal, please contact your [regional office](#).

Verifying your address for enrolment

What is my child's permanent address?

Your child's permanent place of residence is the address at which they permanently live at the time of enrolment. If your child lives at multiple addresses, their permanent residence is the address at which they spend most of their weekdays.

How does the school verify my child's permanent address?

Schools may request supporting documentation, such as copies of rental agreements or unconditional contracts of sale, to verify your permanent residence. To support this, you may be asked to complete a 100-point residential address check. Documents should show the same parent/carer name and address as recorded on the school enrolment application form.

If unsure what you need to provide, ask your local school or refer to the Residential address check on the [Enrolling in school](#) webpage.

My child lives some of the time with their other parent, does this mean they have two local schools?

If your child resides at multiple addresses, their permanent residence is the address at which they spend most of their weekdays. If they spend an equal amount of time at two addresses, both addresses will be considered their permanent address and they will be entitled to enrol at either school.

The final choice of which school they attend rests with the parents/carers (or with the student if they are an adult or mature minor for the purpose of making enrolment decisions).

Can schools reject an enrolment application if my lease is shorter than 12 months?

It is not acceptable for a school to disregard a rental agreement that is shorter than 12 months if it accurately reflects your residential circumstances. However, the school may seek further information closer to enrolment. If your child's permanent residence changes after a placement offer is made and before they start school, the offer may be withdrawn.

I am unable to provide evidence of my child's permanent residence. What should I do?

If you are unable to provide proof of permanent address because of your individual circumstances, you can seek advice from your local school or a Community Liaison Officer in the [regional office](#).

Specialist schools

What is a specialist school?

A specialist school is an education setting that only accommodates students with disability and high needs. Specialist schools and campuses can be co-located with mainstream schools or operate as standalone facilities.

Do specialist schools have school zones?

No, specialist schools do not have school zones. You may choose to enrol your child at any specialist school, provided they are eligible for enrolment and there is sufficient accommodation at the school.

How do I find my nearest specialist school?

Visit the [Find my School](#) website, type in your home address and click on the 'Specialist' schools tab to find your five nearest specialist schools (listed by order of proximity to your home address).

Find my School also provides contact details for each school and their specialisation. The school's specialisation determines their enrolment eligibility criteria.

How do I find out if my child is eligible to attend a specialist school?

Specialist schools have specific enrolment eligibility criteria. Contact the specialist school directly to find out what their enrolment criteria are, using the details available on the [Find my School](#) website. Alternatively, you can contact your [regional office](#) who can provide information about various schools' eligibility criteria.

The specialist school search results include each school's specialisation. What does this mean?

Specialist school programs are designed to meet the education and support needs of students with specific disabilities and are categorised according to the type of disability they cater for. These school categories are called 'specialisations' on the [Find my School](#) website.

For more information on the specialisations (specialist school category), click on the information icon next to each specialisation on [Find my School](#). It is important to note that this is only a guide. It is recommended that you contact the school or your [regional office](#) to discuss your child's eligibility to enrol.

How do I enrol my child in a specialist school?

Contact your chosen specialist school to find out more about their enrolment policy (including eligibility criteria) and how to apply. Regional offices work with specialist schools to review enrolment applications and determine whether prospective students meet the enrolment criteria.

Can I get help with transporting my child to a specialist school?

If you enrol your child in a specialist school, you may be able to get support with transport.

Please refer to the below FAQs on 'Transport of students with disability'.

Transport

Transport for students attending a local government school

Is there any assistance with travelling to school?

Yes, there are a range of transportation options for eligible young people, including the:

- School Bus Program
- conveyance allowance.

Students may also be eligible for discounted travel through a child myki card or a Victorian Student Pass. For more information, see: [Travelling to School](#)

Will my child still be able to catch the bus to school if zones change, if they are already attending the school?

Yes, they will be granted an exemption to continue with their existing travel arrangements.

Any child – and their siblings – who currently catches a school bus will still be able to catch a school bus.

While school zones will continue to be reviewed annually, the department will work with schools to identify active travel opportunities.

Transport for students with disability

What is a designated transport area (DTA)?

Help with travel is available for eligible students attending specialist schools. To meet the criteria for transport help, your child must live in the designated transport area (DTA) of the specialist school.

DTAs are not school zones. You may choose to enrol your child at any specialist school, provided they are eligible for enrolment and there is available space at the school. However, only students residing in the DTA of the specialist school they attend are eligible for transport assistance.

For more information, see: [Getting to and from school for students with a disability](#).

How are designated transport areas determined?

DTAs are designed to ensure that bus travel times do not exceed 120 minutes in either direction for any student. DTAs are established or amended by the Student Transport Unit of the Department of Education.

Which schools have designated transport areas?

Most specialist schools have DTAs. There are a small number of specialist schools that do not have DTAs, generally because they are state-wide providers. This includes deaf education specialist schools. Students attending these schools may still be eligible for transport assistance under the Students with Disabilities Transport Program. Families can contact these schools directly for information about student transport assistance.

How can I find out if my address is in the designated transport area for a specialist school?

Enter your address into the [Find my transport area](#) search function on the [Getting to and from school for students with a disability](#) webpage. Clicking on any result will show a map of the full DTA for that school.

You can also contact schools directly for information about their DTA.

Has the designated transport area for my child's specialist school changed?

With new specialist settings opening in 2024, there are likely to be changes to some existing DTAs. These changes will be released later in 2023 once any changes have been confirmed. Where a student attends the same school, transport arrangements will continue to be supported in line with the DTA when the student was first enrolled.

If the designated transport area search function says I live in the DTA for a particular school, does this mean my child can enrol at this school?

DTAs are not school zones and do not determine eligibility to enrol at a specialist school. Specialist schools have enrolment criteria that determine a student's eligibility. To learn more about a specialist school's enrolment criteria, visit the school website, contact the school directly or contact the relevant [regional office](#).

If the designated transport area search function says I live in the DTA for a particular school, does this mean my child is eligible for transport assistance?

The DTA search function allows families to find which specialist school DTAs they live in. Residing in the DTA of the specialist school is only one of the eligibility criteria for the Students with Disabilities Transport Program. In addition, to be eligible for the Students with Disabilities Transport Program, your child must:

- be eligible for the [Program for Students with Disabilities or Disability Inclusion Tier 3 student-level funding](#);
- be enrolled at the school for three or more days each week; and
- be of school age and live in Victoria.

The designated transport area search function says my address is in the DTA for multiple specialist schools. What does this mean?

If your address is within the DTA for multiple specialist schools, your child may be eligible for transport assistance if you choose to enrol your child at one of these schools.

How do I apply for transport assistance to a specialist school?

When enrolling your child at a specialist school, please speak with the school regarding access to transport assistance. The school will provide the relevant information and forms and may assist in completing your application.

When do designated transport areas get updated?

DTAs are reviewed if:

- a new specialist school nearby is established.
- an existing school is closed or re-located.
- the demographics of an area change significantly.
- DTAs are established or amended by the department's Student Transport Unit.

School built capacity

What is capacity?

Capacity is the number of students or teaching spaces a school can accommodate.

A school's **built capacity** is the number of students that can be accommodated in the school's current learning spaces. To ensure equity across schools, the department calculates built capacity for all schools of the same type in the same way.

The department's [Capacity and Area Allocation Advice](#) describes how built capacity is calculated for different types of schools.

A school's **site capacity** is the maximum number of teaching spaces that can be accommodated on a school site. It considers all relevant factors including the physical characteristics of each site and the needs of the local community.

What does built capacity mean for my school?

By knowing a school's built capacity, principals and school councils can plan for future enrolments. The department can also plan for new permanent or relocatable buildings, which may be required due to growth in local enrolments.

How does the school's built capacity affect future enrolments? Can my child still attend my preferred school?

Children of school age have the right to be enrolled at their local school. They can attend an alternative government school of their choosing if that school has the capacity to enrol them.

Can the school get a relocatable building to increase its capacity?

A school may be allocated relocatable buildings to address capacity pressures due to an increase in enrolments from within the school zone. To ensure all students can attend their local school, limited relocatable facilities must be prioritised to support schools under pressure from local enrolment demand.

In some cases, the nature of the site may mean that relocatable buildings cannot be provided. For example, if there is no available room on the site and it would negatively impact the school's open spaces or disrupt essential services such as water and electricity connections.

Why do some schools have a limited capacity?

Capacity limits may be agreed upon in line with current and future expected local enrolment numbers. This ensures that facilities are allocated to schools in the most need of accommodation to support local enrolments.

For some schools, particularly on smaller sites, understanding their capacity enables them to plan, and continue to meet the needs of their community in the long term.

The department is committed to ensuring that every school in Victoria is a great school. This means ensuring that schools have the facilities they need to deliver the full curriculum to every student within the space available.

How does capacity affect choice in government schools?

Victorian students will always have a place at their designated neighbourhood school. Students can also choose to attend a school outside their zone if that school has sufficient capacity.

The Placement Policy says enrolments are subject to 'sufficient accommodation'. What does this mean?

The department's Placement Policy outlines the right for students to enrol at their designated neighbourhood school, and to enrol at another school if there is sufficient accommodation.

Whether a school has sufficient accommodation to enrol additional students depends on a number of factors. This includes whether the school will continue to have appropriate capacity and facilities to support its student population.

Schools must have sufficient accommodation to meet current and future in-zone demand before enrolling students from outside the school zone.

The department makes every effort to increase the built capacity of a school to accommodate students from within the school's zone, however, in some situations additional building infrastructure is not possible (See [Can the school get a relocatable building to increase its capacity?](#)).

Where the built capacity of a school cannot be increased, other options may be considered by the department and the school to manage enrolment pressure. This includes, for example, re-evaluation of the school zone (see [Non-standard zones](#)).