

Year 6 to Year 7 transition information pack 2020

Guidance for parents and carers with Year 6 children at non-government schools (Catholic, independent and home schooling)

Updated 16 April 2020

The Department of Education and Training recognises that in some instances, a local arrangement is in place for non-government primary schools to manage application forms for Year 7 placements in government secondary schools on behalf of parents/carers of students in non-government primary schools.

The advice in this document supports parents/carers with Year 6 children at non-government primary schools who may be considering applying for a place in a government secondary school.

This Transition Information Pack includes the Application for Year 7 Placement 2021 Form and is available at [Moving from primary to secondary school: information for parents](#)

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Education and Training

FOREWORD

PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS COMMENCING YEAR 7 IN 2021

Dear parents and carers,

As your child is now in their final year of primary school, it is time to decide where they will begin secondary school. If you are considering a government school for your child's secondary education, you are required to complete the *Application for Year 7 Placement 2021* form and follow the process included in this information pack.

Enrolling your child, or children, in Year 7 is an important choice. The Department's [findmyschool](#) website allows you to locate your designated neighbourhood government school based on your permanent residential address. The website is the official and most up to date source of information on school zone maps.

Your child has a right to enrol in their designated neighbourhood government school; this right is set out in the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#). Your designated neighbourhood school is determined on the basis of your permanent residential address. Every designated neighbourhood school is a great school that provides a supportive environment that fosters the emotional and intellectual growth of their students.

Applications to government schools other than your designated neighbourhood school are considered subject to the school having available spaces, as outlined in the Department's Placement Policy.

The attached transition timeline and *Frequently Asked Questions* (FAQs) document will help you navigate the transition process.

What you need to do

1. Read the Department's Placement Policy including the priority order of placement at: [Placement Policy](#)
2. Locate your designated neighbourhood school or preferred secondary schools using www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au
3. Complete the *Application for Year 7 Placement 2021* form **by Friday 29 May 2020** and return to either:
 - Your child's non-government primary school. Your primary school will advise you how you should return the form; OR
 - Directly to your preferred government secondary school. You should contact your preferred secondary school for advice on how you should return the form.

If your child's non-government primary school is managing the placement process on your behalf, they will notify you of their Year 7 placement offer for 2021. Where this is not the case, the secondary school/s listed in your application will manage the process and notify you of the outcome of your application.

All parents/carers will be notified in writing of their child's Year 7 placement offers on Wednesday 19 August 2020.

We wish your child well in their transition to Year 7 and trust that secondary schooling will be a richly rewarding experience.

GUIDE TO COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM AND LOCATING YOUR DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

GUIDE FOR PARENTS/CARERS COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FOR YEAR 7 PLACEMENT 2021 FORM

The *Application for Year 7 Placement 2021* form can be found at the end of this pack.

Designated neighbourhood schools can be identified online at www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au

Section 1

Primary school may pre-fill section 1 OR parents/carers to complete.

Sections 2 – 6

Parents/carers to complete.

GUIDE FOR PARENTS/CARERS COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM AND RETURNING IT TO THEIR CHILD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. Your child's non-government primary school may provide you with guidance on how to access this Application. Alternatively, you can access the Application form online here: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/going-to-school/Pages/year-6-to-7.aspx>
2. You should complete all sections of the Application form and sign it. To locate your child's designated neighbourhood Government school for Year 7 in 2021, enter your permanent residential address at www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au. Guidance on how to use the [findmyschool.vic.gov.au](http://www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au) website is on the following page of this document.
3. If relevant, you should attach any recent copies of court orders and/or parenting plans including all Parenting Orders, Intervention Orders, Child Protection Orders and/or an Informal Carer Statutory Declaration, to your Application.
4. **You must return this form by Friday 29 May 2020 to either:**
 - Your child's non-government primary school. Your primary school will advise you how you should return the form; OR
 - Directly to your preferred government secondary school. You should contact your preferred secondary school for advice on how you should return the form.
5. You will receive notification of your child's Year 7 placement offer for 2021 on **Wednesday 19 August 2020.**

HOW TO USE THE FINDMYSCHOOL.VIC.GOV.AU WEBSITE

1. Begin by visiting www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au
2. You can find your designated neighbourhood school by entering your residential address OR searching using the name of a school.
3. The result will show:
 - where the school is located within the zone and the residential address (if provided)
 - information about the school, its region and a link to the school website.
4. To refine results to the type of school, select 'Primary' or 'Secondary'. There is the option to filter results by year level for secondary schools.

To start a new search, simply replace the address or school name.

Note: If your property is intersected by a school zone line, your child residing at that property has the right to attend the school in either zone.

Year 6 to Year 7 transition timeline (for Government schools)

PARENT/CARER COPY

Statewide placement timeline and procedures for 2020-2021

2020 DATES	ACTIVITY
From Tuesday 14 April 2020	Parent/carer transition information pack available for download from the Department's website: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/going-to-school/Pages/year-6-to-7.aspx The pack includes the <i>Application for Year 7 placement 2021</i> form.
Friday 29 May 2020	Parents/carers return the <i>Application for Year 7 placement 2021</i> form by this date.
Wednesday 19 August 2020	Parents/carers of Year 6 students are notified of Year 7 placement offers, in writing.
Thursday 20 August 2020	Parents/carers may commence lodging written placement appeals to their preferred government secondary school using the Year 6 to Year 7 transition placement appeal form.
Monday 31 August 2020	Closing date for parents/carers to lodge a written placement appeal with their preferred secondary school.
Friday 11 September 2020	Secondary schools notify all parents/carers in writing of the outcome of their placement appeal by this date. <i>Note: If your appeal to your preferred secondary school is unsuccessful, you may lodge a further written appeal to the relevant Department of Education Regional Director. Please see the FAQ on the following pages for more information regarding appeals.</i>
Friday 25 September 2020	Closing date for parents/carers to lodge a written placement appeal with the relevant Regional Director where they are unsuccessful with their appeal to the secondary school.
Friday 30 October 2020	Regions notify all parents/carers in writing of the outcome of Regional Director placement appeals by this date. <i>Note: this only applies to appeals received by the closing date of Friday 25 September 2020.</i>
Tuesday 8 December 2020	Government secondary schools host an Orientation Day for Year 6 students.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

GENERAL

1. My child attends a Catholic or independent primary school. How do I lodge an Application for Year 7 Placement form?

Complete the *Application for Year 7 Placement* form and submit it to your preferred government secondary school, or your child's non-government primary school.

Your Department regional office can answer any questions you have to complete the form.

2. My child is home schooled. How do I apply for a place at a government secondary school?

Complete the *Application for Year 7 Placement* form and submit the form to your preferred government secondary school.

Your Department regional office can answer any questions you have to complete the form.

3. How do I find the contact details of my Department regional office?

You can find the regional office contact details and locations on the Department's website, here: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/regions.aspx>

DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHOOLS AND THE DEPARTMENT'S PLACEMENT POLICY

4. What is the legislation that gives my child or children the right to enrol in their designated neighbourhood school?

Children of compulsory school age are guaranteed the right to enrol in their designated neighbourhood 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

5. What is a designated neighbourhood school?

The *designated neighbourhood school* is generally the government school within closest proximity to the student's permanent residential address, unless the Minister for Education or Regional Director has restricted the zone of the school.

For children residing in metropolitan areas, Ballarat, Bendigo or Geelong, the designated neighbourhood school is measured by a straight line from your permanent address. If you live in another area, it's measured by the shortest practical route by road and considers access issues.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/going-to-school/Pages/zones-restrictions.aspx>

6. How can I find my designated neighbourhood secondary school?

Visit www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au and type in your permanent residential address. The website will then locate your designated neighbourhood Government school.

7. How do I use the findmyschool.vic.gov.au website?

Please see instructions on page 5 of this pack.

8. My property sits across two/multiple school zones. Which is my designated neighbourhood school?

Zones are based on proximity to closest school. In some cases, a zone may intersect or cross through parcels of land or properties. If your house sits across two or more school zones, then you have a right to attend any of those schools as your designated neighbourhood school.

9. If my child has two permanent addresses, how is their designated neighbourhood school decided?

If your child resides at multiple addresses, their 'permanent residence' is the address at which they spend the majority of their weekdays.

If your child 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.

10. Can my Year 6 child attend the government secondary school their sibling currently attends even though we are no longer in the zone?

Students with a sibling at the same permanent address, who will be attending the school at the same time in 2021, will be given high-level preference, after students who live within the school zone. This is subject to school capacity and enrolment restrictions.

11. Can my child attend a government secondary school that is not our designated neighbourhood secondary school?

You can request a Year 7 placement at a school that is not your designated neighbourhood school, however that school can only accept your enrolment if there is sufficient capacity at the school. All applications for Year 7 enrolment at a government school are subject to the following principles:

- your child is entitled to be enrolled at their designated neighbourhood school.
- applications to schools other than your designated neighbourhood school are considered subject to the school having available spaces, as per the Priority Order of Placement under The Department of Education and Training's Placement Policy.

12. What is the Department's Placement Policy?

The Placement Policy prioritises children and young people living within the school zone and the siblings of students already attending the school.

Guidance material 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, noting that enrolment on this basis is only used in exceptional circumstances.

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.

13. 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 of placement:

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, noting that enrolment on this basis is only used in exceptional circumstances. This is an overarching consideration.

14. 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. More information on the Department's Privacy Policy is available here: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/privacypolicy.aspx>

15. What evidence may I be asked to provide if I am making an appeal on compassionate grounds?

When making an appeal on compassionate grounds, schools and regions can request that you provide further evidence to support your 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>

CHOOSING A SECONDARY SCHOOL

16. Where can I find general information about the transition to Year 7 at a government school?

The Department's website contains comprehensive information on the transition from Year 6 to Year 7.

For information, please visit: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/going-to-school/Pages/year-6-to-7.aspx>

17. How do I register my child for home schooling in 2021?

When you decide to educate your child at home, you take on responsibility for:

- planning their learning
- teaching them
- assessing what they've learnt.

To apply to register for home schooling you need to submit to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA):

- a completed application form;
- necessary documentation such as proof of your child's identity;
- a learning plan detailing how you intend to address the learning areas.

For more information see: <https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/home/Pages/homeeducation.aspx>

18. My child has a disability. How can I ensure their needs are met at a government secondary school?

The principles of effective transition planning, and placement, for students with disabilities are the same as for all students moving from primary to secondary school. Transition planning for students with disabilities may commence earlier to identify and develop supports for additional needs.

More information about inclusive education is available on the Department's website: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/additional-needs/Pages/default.aspx>

19. What assistance is available to support my child's travel to and from a government secondary school?

A range of transportation options are available to eligible students, including the School Bus Program, travel to specialist schools, the Students with Disabilities Transport Program and conveyance allowance.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/going-to-school/Pages/travel-school.aspx>

THE APPLICATION FOR YEAR 7 PLACEMENT 2021 FORM (THE APPLICATION FORM)

20. How many secondary schools can I preference on the Application form?

You may list up to three government schools, in your order of preference, in section 4B.

If your child is not successful in gaining a Year 7 placement at one of your three school preferences, they will be placed at your designated neighbourhood school.

21. Do I need to identify three secondary school preferences if my first preference is my designated neighbourhood school?

No. It is sufficient to identify one preference if that school is your designated neighbourhood school.

22. What happens if my child does not receive a place in their preferred secondary school, or schools?

Your child will be allocated to their designated neighbourhood school.

23. How do I apply for a Year 7 placement at the government secondary school where my Year 6 child's sibling is currently enrolled?

If you wish your child to attend the same government secondary school as their sibling, who resides at the same permanent residential address *and* who will be continuing at the school in 2021, please ensure the *Sibling Claim* information is completed in Section 4C of the Application form. Enrolment on sibling grounds is subject to school capacity and enrolment restrictions.

24. Who may sign the Application form?

Where practicable, all parents/carers with parental responsibility for a child should sign and submit a single application for placement 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/spag/safety/Pages/parentalresponsibility.aspx

Note: where it is not practicable or possible for parents/carers to sign a single Application form, this should be communicated to your child's primary school or your preferred government secondary school who will work with you and the Department's regional office to develop a solution for the specific situation of your family.

It is expected that if parents/carers have difficulty reaching agreement, the dispute should be resolved between the parents/carers 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.

PLACEMENT APPEALS

25. How do I make an appeal about my child's Year 7 placement for 2021?

In the first instance, parents/carers should lodge a written appeal with the preferred secondary school. This is the school at which your child has been unsuccessful in gaining a Year 7 placement.

Your appeal may be lodged using the Year 6 to Year 7 Transition Placement Appeal form which will be available either from your primary school or the preferred secondary school.

This written appeal should be lodged with the preferred secondary school, by Monday 31 August 2020.

It will be considered by the school's placement committee and/or Principal and you will receive written notification of the outcome by Friday 11 September 2020.

26. What happens if my appeal to my preferred secondary school is not successful?

If your appeal to your preferred secondary school is unsuccessful and you believe that your grounds have not been adequately considered by school's placement committee and/or Principal, you may lodge a further written appeal to the relevant Department of Education and Training Regional Director by Friday 25 September 2020.

Appeals to the Regional Director may not be considered if you have not appealed to your preferred secondary school in the first instance.

Appeals are considered by a panel of senior regional staff that assess the appeal against the priority order of placement, and in exceptional circumstances, on compassionate grounds.

This panel provides a recommendation to the relevant Regional Director who makes the final decision. You will receive written notification of the outcome by Friday 30 October 2020. This outcome concludes the appeal process.

27. Can I lodge an appeal to the relevant 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 in December 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 relevant Regional Director and may not be accepted.

If you wish to lodge an appeal after Friday 25 September 2020, you should contact your regional office for advice.

You can find the regional office contact details and locations on the Department's website, here: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/regions.aspx>

PRIVACY NOTICE

APPLICATION FOR YEAR 7 PLACEMENT 2021 FORM

1. The Department of Education and Training (the Department) is one legal entity and includes all Victorian government schools.
2. The primary school may pre-populate sections of the attached *Application for Year 7 Placement* form (*the Application*) from information already held in its records.
3. The *Application* asks for personal information such as your child's given name, family name, date of birth, gender and permanent residential address which are necessary to ensure that:
 - a. you are provided with as much choice as possible
 - b. that all children who require a place in a Victorian government school for Year 7 are provided with one
 - c. the transition process is as smooth as possible for your child.
4. If you wish your child to attend a government secondary school currently being attended by an sibling who lives at the same permanent residential address, and who will still be attending the said school in 2021, please identify the school's name, sibling's name, and future year level of the sibling in the *Application*.
5. In order to assist the primary school to properly manage the Year 7 placement process, please ensure that all information provided to the school through the *Application* and other means, is accurate and current, including:
 - a. Contact phone numbers
 - b. Permanent residential address
 - c. Emergency contact details
 - d. Copies of court orders and/or parenting plans including all Parenting Orders, Intervention Orders and Child Protection Orders and/or an Informal Carer Statutory Declaration.
6. When a student has been accepted at a Victorian government school, the school may request additional information about your child's educational abilities and interests and skills. Subject to consent, the primary school may also provide to the Victorian government school personal and health information about each student in non-electronic formats.
7. Transferring personal and health information to a student's next Victorian government school is in the best interests of students because it assists that next school to provide optimal education and support to each student.
8. Personal and health information about students will only be shared with school staff who need to know that information to educate or support the student, to fulfil legal requirements or where permitted by law.
9. If you require further information concerning transfer of your child's information, please contact your child's primary school.