



REFERRAL POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Yarra Me School on 9478 8895.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to specify eligibility criteria for students seeking referral to Yarra Me School.

POLICY

BACKGROUND

Yarra Me School is a Victorian government specialist school that exclusively addresses the educational needs of 'at-risk students' with significant social and emotional challenges. The students we support are in a state of crisis, exhibiting a combination of educational, behavioural, social and emotional problems. We engage students in a positive, evidence based social and emotional learning curriculum that is both needs based and caring. YarraMe School provides students with personalised supports that are tailored to maximise positive student engagement in learning and social skill development.

When a student is referred to Yarra Me School the student will also remain enrolled at their home school with the intention of returning better equipped to cope within the environment of school, home and the community.

At our **Preston Campus** welcome eligible students from the time they are aged 6 up until the time they turn 12.

Students participating in our programs at our **Hurstbridge Farm Campus** have been placed in the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing's Hurstbridge Farm therapeutic residential care setting because they have histories of abuse and neglect that produce complex presentations arising from the trauma and attachment disruption that are the sequelae of such experiences. These young people are aged between 10 and 17.

Eligibility criteria for referral to Yarra Me School is the same as that outlined in the Department of Education's [Flexible Learning Options \(FLOs\)](#) policy, noting however that we are not a FLO school so the whole policy does not apply.

When our **Preston campus** has insufficient places to meet demand, the principal or delegate of Yarra Me School will consider referrals based on:

- the student being enrolled at a Victorian government school in the [North Eastern Melbourne or Hume Merri-bek areas](#), as defined by the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training and subject to change from time-to-time.
- an assessment of educational needs and risk
- whether there or any other suitable educational options available to the student

Applications from students who do not meet the eligibility criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the region, in consultation with both the principal of Yarra Me School and the principal of the school the student is enrolled.

REFERRAL PROCESS

Students can be referred by the student's main school and/or a Department of Education allied health officer at any time. An enrolment committee considers the referral and prepares a recommendation. Admission and commencement are subject to suitability and availability of space in the program, with student intake at the beginning of semester 1 or the beginning of semester 2.

APPEAL PROCESS

Parents/carers are able to appeal against the decision not to provide entry, unless a decision has already been made by the Regional Director. This can occur in relation to placements at any age level and the following process applies:

1. **Appeal to the school's placement committee and/or Principal** Appeals are to be made in writing and lodged with the Principal.

The school's decision will be communicated to the parent/carer in writing. In assessing the appeal, the school will check to ensure compliance with the priority order of placement, and the processes for verifying permanent address, as appropriate.

2. **Appeal to the Regional Director**

If the appeal at the school level is unsuccessful and parents/carers are not satisfied that their appeal has been adequately considered, they are able to escalate this by lodging an appeal in writing to:

Regional Director, North Western Victoria Region
Locked Bag 2001, Coburg, VIC 3058
nwvr@education.vic.gov.au

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Made available publicly on our school website
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read alongside and in conjunction with the following Department policies:

- [Enrolment](#)
- [Exemptions from School Attendance and Enrolment](#)
- [Schools' Privacy Policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	Term 4, 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before term 4, 2026

This policy is subject to review by the school Principal every 3 to 4 years. Proposed updates will be made on a needs basis, with any proposed changes relating to entry criteria and priority order of placement requiring approval from the Minister for Education or the Regional Director, as the Minister's delegate.