# Updates to enrolment procedures

## Information for families

## What has changed?

The following changes have been made to the Enrolment in Kindergarten to Year 12 procedures and applies to all public school enrolments starting in Term 1, 2026.

### Updates to the non-local enrolments

In 2025, we introduced criteria to prioritise non-local enrolment applications for students with certain learning and wellbeing needs, siblings of currently enrolled students, and children of school staff.

In 2026, non-local enrolment will also be prioritised for:

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students to recognise cultural, family and kinship connections.
- Incoming Kindergarten students who have attended a public preschool co-located with a NSW public school.

### More flexibility for children of Defence Members

Enrolment procedures are being updated to ensure greater flexibility of school enrolment requirements for the children of Defence Members during relocation and while securing housing.

### Recognising Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander kinship

Schools will have greater flexibility to enrol Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, including for kinship connections, cultural safety, access to Aboriginal language study and cultural responsibilities such as Sorry Business.

### Continuity for our most vulnerable students

Specific guidance for students on bail and students transitioning from schools in youth justice centres and custody is also being incorporated and local enrolment applications for students in this category will now be processed within 2 school days.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Do these changes apply to my child?

The 2026 changes to enrolment procedures in NSW public schools relate to you if:

- your child is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with kinship, language or cultural considerations
- your child has been in out-of-home care, on bail, or is transitioning from a school in a youth justice centre or custody
- one of your child's parents has served or is currently serving in the Defence Force and may be impacted by relocation requirements resulting from carrying out work for the Australian Defence Force.

## Will every school be required to apply these changes?

Depending on the school's enrolment availability, schools are required to apply the changes for non-local enrolments for students enrolling for Term 1, 2026.

Changes to the enrolment procedures for non-local students will not affect eligibility requirements for specialist settings or programs, such as fully selective schools, schools for specific purposes (SSPs)), distance education schools, and schools with classes or programs with specific eligibility requirements (for example, opportunity classes, specialist sports and/or creative or performing arts streams). These schools are subject to their own procedures, eligibility criteria and assessments and will continue to follow their current enrolment processes.

Single-sex schools must apply the changes as long as the enrolling child meets the school's eligibility requirement for that sex. Contact the relevant school to ask how these changes apply.

## Will my application for non-local enrolment automatically be accepted if my child meets the updated criteria?

These changes do not guarantee enrolment of your child in a non-local public school. Schools that have non-local and local enrolment availability will consider your application. Schools that have limited non-local enrolment availability will prioritise non-local enrolments for:

- students with learning and wellbeing needs requiring reasonable adjustments and/or additional educational support, including
  - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students with cultural considerations and/or family and kinship connections and relationships
  - Disability
  - Developmental age
  - Trauma
  - Child protection concerns
  - Medical and individual needs and circumstances
- siblings of students currently attending the school, with siblings of students in support units given priority
- an incoming Kindergarten student who has attended a public preschool co-located with the school.

Contact the relevant school for more information.

## Does this mean only students meeting priority criteria for non-local enrolments will be accepted from now on?

No, parents are welcome to apply to enrol their child at any public school if the child is eligible to attend the school and the school can accommodate the child within its enrolment availability. All schools that have limited non-local enrolment availability must prioritise and consider applications against the updated non-local enrolment criteria.

## My previous non-local enrolment application was declined, but my child now meets the updated criteria. Can I apply again?

Yes. If you applied for your child to go to a non-local school in 2026 and the application was declined, you can apply again if your child meets the updated non-local enrolment criteria. Please follow the steps outlined in the section below, "How do I change where I have enrolled my child?".

## I have submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI)) for Year 6 to 7 transition. Can I change where I have enrolled my child?

Yes. If your child meets the updated non-local enrolment criteria, you can submit a new application to your preferred non-local school, even if you've already submitted an EOI for Year 6 to 7 transition. Please follow the steps outlined in the section below, "How do I change where I have enrolled my child?".

## How do I change where I have enrolled my child?

Parents or carers who would like to enrol their child in a non-local school need to follow these steps to change their enrolment:

**Online enrolment applications**

1. Go to the public school website that you wish to apply to enrol, then click on enrolment in the menu options.
2. On the enrolment webpage, under the how to enrol heading click on the link to the online enrolment application .
3. Once you have submitted your application to enrol, the school may make you an offer which you will need to accept within 14 days.
4. If your application is accepted, contact the school your child was previously enrolled in to withdraw that enrolment.

**Paper form applications**

1. Contact the non-local public school to find out if they can accommodate your child.
2. If the school can accommodate your child, please complete a new paper application form, which the school can provide.
3. Once you have submitted your application to enrol form, the school may make you an offer which you will need to accept within 14 days.
4. If your application is accepted, contact the school your child was previously enrolled in to withdraw that enrolment.

## What if I do not have a permanent address or the required identifying documentation?

There are circumstances in which a student may be enrolled without proof of address. These circumstances include, but are not limited to, cultural considerations, children of Defence Members and children or young people in out-of-home care, on bail, or transitioning from schools in youth justice centres and custody. Please contact the relevant school for more information if you feel that this may be applicable to your situation.

## Do the 2025 enrolment policy and procedure changes still apply?

Yes. The changes introduced in 2025 will continue to apply for 2026 enrolments. These include:

- All students on a temporary resident visa can enrol in their local public school, based on their residential address.
- Siblings of currently enrolled students in a public school are prioritised for non-local enrolment, with priority given to siblings of students in support classes in eligible mainstream schools.
- Children of school staff can be considered for non-local enrolment in a public school.

For more information about these changes, or to check if they apply to your child, contact the relevant school.

## Where can I find more information?

**For enrolment enquiries, speak to your preferred school. Find your school's contact details at:** education.nsw.gov.au/find-a-public-school

**For more information on how to enrol in a NSW** government school: education.nsw.gov.au/enrolment

For more information on how to enrol in a **NSW** government school as a Temporary Resident: https://www.deinternational.nsw.edu.au/

For general enrolment enquiries, contact the Department of Education head office: 1300 679 332

Telephone Interpreter Service If you need an interpreter to assist you to contact a school or the Department of Education, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 13 14 50 and ask for an interpreter in your language. Tell the operator the phone number you want to call and the operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with the conversation. You will not be charged for this service.