



Education in our school for our world

Access and Admission Policy

Charles Weston School Coombs (CWSC) is an ACT Education Directorate public school and, as such, adheres to system and Australian law requirements for access and admission. [Enrolling in a Public School](#)

Guaranteed place at your local school

All ACT children and young people from Kindergarten to Year 12 are guaranteed enrolment at their designated local public school, based on the [Priority Enrolment Area](#) (PEA).

[Charles Weston School Coombs](#) offers places for students residing within its PEA, providing a welcoming and inclusive environment where every child can learn, grow, and achieve their full potential. The school is committed to supporting diverse needs, celebrating differences, and ensuring all students feel valued and included in the life of the school. These values reflect the IB Learner Profile and promote international mindedness by fostering respect, empathy, and understanding of different perspectives within our diverse community.

Compulsory education age requirements

In accordance with the *Education Act 2004*, all children living in the ACT must be enrolled in and attending school (or registered for home education) from the age of 6 until they complete Year 12 or reach the age of 17, whichever occurs first. In addition, preschool is available for eligible four-year-old children in the year prior to starting kindergarten. To find out when your child can start school or preschool in the ACT please see the [School Age Calculator](#). Families who wish to delay full-time enrolment for a child of compulsory school age are required to apply for an [Exemption](#).

Preschool

All four-year-old ACT children are entitled to 15 hours of free preschool a week at an ACT public school. Eligibility is based on the child turning four on or before 30 April in the year they start preschool. While all eligible children are guaranteed a preschool place, enrolment at a specific preschool depends on capacity and prioritisation criteria, including student wellbeing, siblings already enrolled at the school, and residence within the PEA.

Preschool applications are assessed against established prioritisation criteria rather than on a 'first come, first served' basis. Priority is given to individual circumstances relating to student wellbeing, followed by applications from ACT-resident siblings of students concurrently enrolled at the primary school. Children living within the school's [Priority Enrolment Area \(PEA\)](#) are then considered, subject to available capacity.

In situations where applications from families residing in the PEA exceed the number of available places, enrolments are allocated based on the distance between the child's home and the preschool. High demand preschools may, if they have capacity after prioritising applicants who meet the criteria, enrol applicants who do not meet the criteria. Preschools not designated as high demand may consider applications which do not meet the prioritisation criteria, subject to capacity.



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Accessing free three year old preschool

The ACT Education Directorate provides a “free three-year-old preschool” program, offering eligible 3-year-old children up to 300 hours per year of quality, play-based early learning. To access the program, families must enrol their child with a participating early childhood service, known as a “partner provider.” More than 140 services across the ACT currently deliver this program. Parents seeking a suitable service can locate a partner provider by consulting the Directorate’s published list at act.gov.au/playandlearn or by using the national Early Childhood service-finder tool (for example via the Starting Blocks website).

Further details are available at [Free Three Year Old Preschool](#)

Applying for an ACT public school

[Online Enrolment](#) in the ACT is available for children from preschool through to Year 12, for residents of both the ACT and the surrounding NSW region. Applications for the current school year are processed in the order they are received. Information regarding the process for accepting an offer to an ACT public school can be found in the [Accepting my offer](#) guidelines.

Enrolling in an ‘out of area’ school

CWSC is a [Category B School](#). Category B schools accept enrolments from within their PEA, but may also consider out-of-area applications subject to capacity. Out-of-area enrolments are assessed against the ACT Education Directorate’s out-of-area criteria, including:

1. Legal considerations, such as Court Orders requiring enrolment at a specific school.
2. Individual circumstances based on student wellbeing.
3. ACT-resident siblings who will be concurrently enrolled.
4. Other factors outlined in the Directorate’s enrolment procedures.

Out-of-area applications are considered in accordance with these criteria and available capacity. If your application to an out-of-area school is unsuccessful, it will be forwarded to your local school. The local school will then issue an Offer Letter. Should you wish to contest the decision, you may request a [Review](#) of the enrolment outcome.

Specific disability programs available in ACT public schools

All [Students with a disability](#) are welcome and encouraged to attend their local public school, in line with the *Education Amendment Act 2024*. Supports may include the Inclusion Support Program, vision and hearing support, and small group or individual learning support programs. Eligibility is determined through the ACT Student Disability Criteria, with input from school psychologists and families.



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If you have any questions regarding your enrolment application, please contact the school directly using the email address listed on the [school enrolment contacts page](#). You may also call the Enrolments Helpline on 02 6205 5429 for further information. For queries relating to enrolment, schooling, or supports such as healthcare provisions, inclusion, or access adjustments, please contact [your local school](#) promptly to discuss how we can best welcome, support, and include your child. This Access and Admission Policy will be reviewed as required, in accordance with updates or changes to system enrolment policies and procedures advised by the ACT Education Directorate.

Related Resources:

[Enrol in a Public School - ACT Kindergarten to Year 12](#)

[Enrol in a Public School ACT - Preschool](#)

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