

FAQs about Enrolment Schemes

Here are some frequently asked questions that parents, whānau and community may have about enrolling their children at a school. If you have further questions, please contact your school office for information about their enrolment scheme, or the Ministry of Education contact at the end of this document.

What rights does my child have to enrol at a school?

All domestic students are entitled to free enrolment at a state school between their fifth birthday through to the first of January after their nineteenth birthday.

Can I enrol a child at any school in my area?

Not necessarily. Many state schools have enrolment schemes which help the school manage their school roll.

What is the difference between an *enrolment scheme* and a *zone*?

- An enrolment scheme includes a home zone, priority for out of zone enrolments, and may also include entry criteria if the school runs special programmes.
- A home zone is a clearly defined geographical boundary around the school. Students living inside this home zone are guaranteed a place at the school.
- Students who live outside the school's home zone can apply to enrol, but the enrolment is subject to a place being available for them. If there are more applicants than available places, then the school runs a pre-enrolment process called a ballot to allocate the available places.

How do I know if my school has a home zone or what the home zone is for my school?

All current enrolment schemes can be found at [Find a school](#) where you can view a map of your local home zone and a written description.

Information about enrolment schemes are also available on each school's website, or by contacting the school for information.

Why do some schools have enrolment schemes?

An enrolment scheme is a way of preventing overcrowding at the school.

A home zone:

- allows all students to attend a reasonably convenient school.
- enables the Ministry of Education to make best use of the schools in the surrounding area.

What does the legislation have to say about enrolment schemes?

Current legislation states that enrolment schemes should:

- as far as possible exclude no more students than necessary to avoid overcrowding;
- enable the Ministry to make best use of the existing networks of state schools;
- ensure that the selection of applicants for enrolment at the school is carried out in a fair and transparent manner;
- enable students to attend a reasonably convenient school;
- as far as possible, not exclude local students.

My children attend a school which is changing its home zone boundaries. We currently live inside the zone, but we won't when the zone changes. Will my children be able to continue attending the school?

Yes. When a home zone changes, currently enrolled students can continue attending the school.

Some schools *may* also operate **transitional arrangements** for families impacted by zoning changes. This means that, in some circumstances, siblings of current students living out of zone, may also enrol at the same school. This is commonly known as 'grandparenting'.

The Ministry will determine whether a transitional arrangement is appropriate for any new or amended home zones.

What is grandparenting or a transitional arrangement?

A transitional arrangement is not always appropriate and is not automatically applied.

When a transition arrangement is in place, younger siblings can enrol at the same school as their older sibling, and gives families certainty about their enrolment eligibility. These students would be treated as in-zone and have the same entitlement to enrol as if they lived in the home zone.

Transitional arrangements do not apply to everyone. The following criteria must be met:

- (1) New student enrolling lives outside the home zone of the school (and in the old home zone if it is an amended zone); and
- (2) New student enrolling has a sibling already enrolled at the school who was enrolled at the time the enrolment scheme was implemented.

The school may request evidence to verify your information before enrolling a new student under the transitional arrangement.

If my child lives in zone for a school, do they have to go to that school?

No. However, the school will guarantee a place for your child at that school.

If I live one street out of zone, can I still attend?

No. If you do not live within the school's designated home zone, then you can not automatically attend the school. You may apply to enrol your child as an out of zone student using the school's ballot process, if applicable.

What if I live outside the home zone?

A school with an enrolment scheme **may have the capacity to** take students from outside their home zone.

- In this case the school must advertise the availability of places and the application process (including dates), usually on their website. Out of zone students may then apply for enrolment.
- If there are more applicants than places available, a ballot will be held. Applications for enrolment will be balloted in the following order of priority:
 - students accepted for enrolment in a special programme run by the school;
 - siblings of current students;
 - siblings of former students;
 - children of former students of the school;
 - children of board employees and board members' children;
 - all other students.

What if I am unsuccessful in the ballot?

You will be placed on a wait list and the school will let you know your place on the wait list.

How do you define living in the ‘home zone’?

If your usual place of residence is within the school’s designated home zone, you may apply for enrolment.

- The school may require proof of residence e.g. a tenancy agreement, certificate of title, or utility bills with an address.
- If the school finds you have given false information, the school may refuse to enrol the student or annul the enrolment.

What can I do if a school tells me that it cannot enrol my child?

Firstly, check whether the school has an enrolment scheme.

- If the school *does not* have an enrolment scheme, the school should accept all enrolments. If the school declines your request, ask them to put their decision in writing along with any relevant details. You can then contact your nearest Ministry of Education office for assistance.
- If the school *does* have an enrolment scheme, check to see whether you live in the home zone. You will be able to see a copy of the scheme at the school or visit [Find a School](#). If you do not live in the school’s home zone, then there will be another school that is reasonably convenient to your home that your child could attend.

My grandchildren/nieces/nephews/whānau are coming to live with me, can they attend my local school?

If your local school *does not* have a home zone, then they will be able to attend without any problems.

If your local school *does* have a home zone, and you live within that zone, you will need to provide evidence to the school that you have **primary duty of care** for that child, and you both live in zone.

My child attends a school with a zone, I now have to move to a new address which is not in zone for that school. What should I do?

If your child *has already started* at the school, you will need to inform the school that you have to move.

- In most cases that should not cause any problems. However, if the school believes you have used a temporary address specifically to gain access to the school, the Board may decide to review the enrolment.

If your child *has not yet started* at the school and you have moved out of zone, your child will be considered out of zone that school. They will be considered as in-zone for the local school at your new address.

Are things any different at a Kura Kaupapa Māori, state integrated school or a designated character school?

Schools of these types may have authority to operate enrolment schemes if they expect to receive more applicants for the school than there are available places.

Enrolment schemes at these schools do not have to include a home zone or provide for a ballot.

- A *Kura Kaupapa Māori* is a state school where teaching is conducted in Māori and the school’s aims, purposes and objectives reflect the Te Aho Matua philosophy. Kura Kaupapa Māori can restrict enrolments to the children of parents who accept the Kura’s aims, purposes and objectives.
- A *state integrated school* is a school with a special character (e.g. of a certain religion or philosophy), which has been integrated into the state system. Every integrated school has a maximum roll number which it cannot exceed. An integrated school must cater for students who meet its special character requirements (preference students). If there are

places left, then the school is able to enrol a small number of students who do not meet the special character requirements (non-preference students).

- A *designated character school* is a state school with a particular character (but different from integrated schools and kura kaupapa Māori). These schools can restrict enrolments to the children of parents who accept the school's aims, purposes and objectives.

How do I contact the Ministry of Education?

Still have an unanswered question? email us at [\[EMAIL ADDRESS\]](#)