



Enrolment Policy

DOCUMENT VERSION 2

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Review By:	Davina Bate, Principal		
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Commitment to Fair and Transparent Enrolment

Giant Steps Melbourne is dedicated to enrolling students through a fair, transparent, and inclusive process. We ensure that families receive comprehensive and accurate information when entering into an enrolment agreement. The school maintains accurate records in compliance with legal obligations related to enrolment.

This policy outlines the principles and framework that guide student admissions to Giant Steps Melbourne.

Services Provided

Giant Steps Melbourne offers a transdisciplinary approach, integrating speech, occupational, and music therapy with teaching. Our collaborative team develops individualised plans and goals tailored to each child's needs, aligned with the Victorian Curriculum and Victorian Pathways Certificate.

Special features of the Giant Steps program

- A transdisciplinary approach where speech, occupational and music therapists collaborate with teachers and educators to develop individual programs, specific to each child's needs and abilities, aligned with the Victorian Curriculum and Victorian Pathways Certificate.
- A class grouping structure whereby students engage in whole class, small group, paired, whole school and individual learning programs, as appropriate.
- Highly trained and committed staff.
- Programs and therapies based on current research.
- Setting individual goals and close monitoring of a child's progress.
- Program adjustments are made based on each child's needs.
- Parent consultation and guidance for supporting students within the home environment.
- Home visits and support for transitioning to new educational settings when required.

Additional services

Giant Steps Autism Services offers a range of outreach services, including speech, music and occupational therapies. The school also provides educational support, parent training, and professional development for providers and professionals in the wider community through The Autism Training Hub. Additionally, families have access to an on-site Mental Health Clinic with a visiting psychiatrist.

Fees apply for service provisions such as outreach services.

Vision Statement

Giant Steps Melbourne will be recognised as a centre of excellence for the creation, implementation and dissemination of innovation and effective programs and services for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families.

Mission Statement

Giant Steps Australia seeks to develop intensive therapeutic and educational programs to ensure that each child can reach their full potential.

Giant Steps also seeks to provide support to families, to improve understanding of autism in the wider community and to develop best practice among carers and professionals.

Core Values

- Maintain a culture of best practice service to individuals with autism
- Remain open to the acceptance of new ideas and approaches, seeking continuous improvement in all that we do
- Recognise the skills of our staff, encouraging commitment and dedication from a team of quality people
- Strengthen professional relationships within and outside Giant Steps Sydney
- Adopt collaborative approaches to challenges
- Promote constructive reciprocal involvement within the community
- Pursuing growth opportunities consistent with our core undertakings whilst maintaining prudent financial and risk management
- Celebrate our achievements
- Committed to the health, welfare, and safety of each student.
- Giant Steps has zero tolerance of child abuse.

Eligibility Requirements

Our school is funded in part by the Victoria Department of Education as well as the Federal Department of Education, both of which have specific criteria for placement in a special school.

To be eligible for enrolment, students must have a primary diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, supported by a current report from a specialist medical practitioner or registered psychologist with appropriate clinical experience. The report and documented evidence must include:

- A completed Application Form with supporting documentation, submitted by parents or legal guardians.
- The nature of the student's disorder.
- Documented evidence of a developmental disability affecting verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction significantly impacting the child's learning.
- Functional assessment consistent with the student's disorder.

Students must also be eligible to receive Federal and State government funding.

Admissions

Vacancies occur under the following circumstances:

- A student transitions to a new program due to age
- A student leaves the school
- A student graduates or integrates into a local school
- Additional resources allow for more enrolments

Enrolment Process:

1. Submission of enrolment form and documents
2. Child observation by the principal (or delegate)
3. Parent interview with Funding and Partnership personnel

Offer of placement:

- Availability of a vacancy
- Compatibility with the existing cohort
- Student's age
- Parent commitment to the school's values and programs

Selection Criteria

- Compatibility with the intake group (developmental, social, and behavioral)
- Demonstrated parental support for their child's education, socialisation, communication, and overall wellbeing.
- Ongoing commitment to the school's ethos, including participation in fundraising and community activities

Acceptance of placement

- Offers are subject to a meeting with the parents/guardians and an opportunity for the school to observe the child at the school.
- Acceptance must be agreed upon by all appropriate parents/guardians unless waived by the school.

Conditions of Enrolment

Acceptance of placement

Parents are required to meet with a member of the fundraising team before admission to understand the expectations regarding participation and commitment.

Parent Contributions

Giant Steps is a registered charity, and government funding does not cover all operational costs. The remaining funds are raised through donations and fundraising events. All parents are expected to

contribute to the significant fundraising efforts required to ensure the school's continued successful operation.

Medical Treatment

If a student requires urgent medical treatment and the school cannot contact the parents/guardians despite reasonable efforts, you authorise the school to approve the necessary treatment. You indemnify the school, its staff, and agents for all costs and expenses associated with such treatment.

Change of details

Parents are responsible for notifying the school of any changes to their contact information.

Student Absences

Parents must notify the school of any absences and provide a written note explaining the reason for each absence.

Exclusion from Giant Steps

1. If the Principal, or their delegate, determines that a student's behaviour poses a substantial risk to other students or staff, the student may be excluded permanently or temporarily at the Principal's absolute discretion.
2. If the Giant Steps Australia Board or the Principal determines that the relationship of trust and cooperation between a parent and the school has broken down to the extent that it adversely affects the partnership, the Board or Principal may require the parent to withdraw their child from the school.

Withdrawal from Giant Steps

A term's notice is required if a student's enrolment is to be withdrawn.

Progression to Next Program

Students in the Primary, or Secondary programs must apply if they wish to progress to the next program. Offers are subject to the placement criteria.

Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians

Giant Steps Melbourne is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all students, staff, and families.

We expect all parents and guardians to maintain:

Respectful Communication

- Communicate respectfully with staff, students, and other families always.
- Use appropriate language and tone in all interactions, including in-person, written, and digital communications.

- Raise concerns or complaints through the appropriate channels in a calm and constructive manner.

Supportive Engagement

- Support the school's values, policies, and procedures.
- Work collaboratively with staff to support their child's learning, development, and wellbeing.
- Attend meetings, events, and participate in school activities where possible.

Child Safety and Wellbeing

- Uphold the school's commitment to child safety by following all relevant policies and procedures.
- Report any concerns about child safety to the Principal.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of all students and families.

Positive Role Modelling

- Demonstrate positive behaviour and attitudes that reflect the school's ethos.
- Encourage children to show respect, empathy, and responsibility in their interactions.

Zero Tolerance for Abuse

- Giant Steps Melbourne has zero tolerance for any form of abuse, harassment, or intimidation towards staff, students, or other members of the school community.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in restricted access to the school or, in serious cases, a review of the students' enrolment.

Complaints & Grievances

The school has a formal process for handling complaints, available on request or via the Parent Portal.

Privacy and Data Collection

Giant Steps collects and manages personal information in accordance with:

- the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth),
- the Victorian Information Privacy Act 2000,
- the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic).

Information provided during enrolment is used solely for educational, administrative, and legal purposes, and is stored securely with access limited to authorised staff. Parents/guardians will be notified of the types of data collected and may request access or corrections at any time. The school will not disclose personal information to third parties without consent, unless required by law.

Policy status and review

The principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the Enrolment Policy at least every two years.