

Cohort Entry Information- Ellerslie School

The Board of Ellerslie School has adopted a new Cohort Entry Policy from the beginning of 2025.



Until recently, children in Aotearoa/ New Zealand started school on their fifth birthday, or on any school day after that, as long as they started school by their sixth birthday.

Changes to the Education and Training Act now mean schools can adopt a cohort entry policy: enrolling children in groups on specific days across the year.

Cohort entry limits the days a new entrant student who has turned five can start school to eight times a year, twice per term. Cohort dates are assigned by the Ministry of Education. In 2025 the dates will be:

TERM	START-OF-TERM DATE	MID-TERM DATE
1	3 February 2025	10 March 2025
2	28 April 2025	26 May 2025
3	14 July 2025	18 August 2025
4	6 October 2025	10 November 2025

Questions and Answers

Are children required to enrol in the earliest cohort they are eligible for?

No. Parents still have the option of starting their child with a subsequent cohort, up until their child turns six, if they have concerns about their child's readiness.

Would a cohort entry policy apply to all students starting at the school?

A cohort entry policy does not apply to children who have turned six and entering Years 2-8 or who are transferring from another school or kura.

If my child turns 5 years old the day after a cohort entry date, can they start on their birthday?

Unfortunately not. Your child would be starting at the next cohort entry date.

If my child turns 5 years old the day after a cohort entry date, can they begin a day earlier with the cohort? Unfortunately not. Children in New Zealand legally cannot attend school until they are 5 years old.

When is the latest my child can start school? In New Zealand all children must be enrolled by their 6th birthday.

My child is just 5 and has already been enrolled in another New Zealand school under a non-cohort policy. Can my child start immediately? Yes, as your child has already been enrolled, they can begin immediately at their new school.

Useful Links

[MOE Practical information for Parents](#)