



Dear Parents,

The Gardens School follows a “cohort entry” procedure for children starting school as New Entrants.

Cohort entry is about helping children settle more easily into school. There is evidence that starting school alongside other children helps build relationships and supports a smoother entry to school life. It can also mean less disruption for new entrant teachers who are able to prepare for groups of children arriving on a specific date, rather than on an individual and ad hoc basis throughout the year.

Pre-visits and parent information sessions will be scheduled for the **end of the school holidays** prior to a child starting and we encourage attendance at these.

Children will be able to start school at the **beginning of the term closest to their fifth birthday, or at the beginning of a later term, if parents wish to wait longer before starting their child at school** (*all children must be enrolled to start school by their sixth birthday*). To determine the correct term for starting school, a mid-term date is used and this is the cut off point for each term. A child’s 5th birthday must fall **BEFORE** this date in order to start in that Term.

New Entrant children who move in-zone/enrol once a term has commenced must wait for the next intake date, before starting, to meet with Ministry of Education rules of cohort entry.

The mid-term dates for 2026 have been set by the Ministry of Education and are as follows. Pre-visit dates are outlined below:

2026 Terms	Start Date	Cut off date for enrolment (turning 5 no later than)	Pre Visit and Parent Information Meeting
Term One	2nd February, 2026	9th March, 2026	Thursday 29th January, 9.00am - 10.00am
Term Two	20th April, 2026	2nd June, 2026	Thursday 24th April, 2026, 9.00am - 10.00am
Term Three	20th July, 2026	24th August, 2026	Thursday 10th July, 2026, 9.00am - 10.00am
Term Four	12th October, 2026	16th November, 2026	Thursday 8th October 2026, 9.00am - 10.00am
Term One, 2027	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	To be confirmed