

## Forecasting School Demand

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# Introduction

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To assess demand for independent schooling at the proposed ACC Casey site, we first examined parent preferences and enrolment choices. This process involved:

- **Defining the catchment** - determining the distance families are willing to travel for schooling.
- **Quantifying current students** - identifying how many students currently reside and attend school within the catchment.
- **Accounting for population growth** - projecting the increase in school-aged children in the catchment over the coming years.
- **Assessing current sector capacity** - reviewing the number of schools in the catchment, their sectoral breakdown (i.e. government, Catholic, independent), and the extent of unmet demand for independent options.

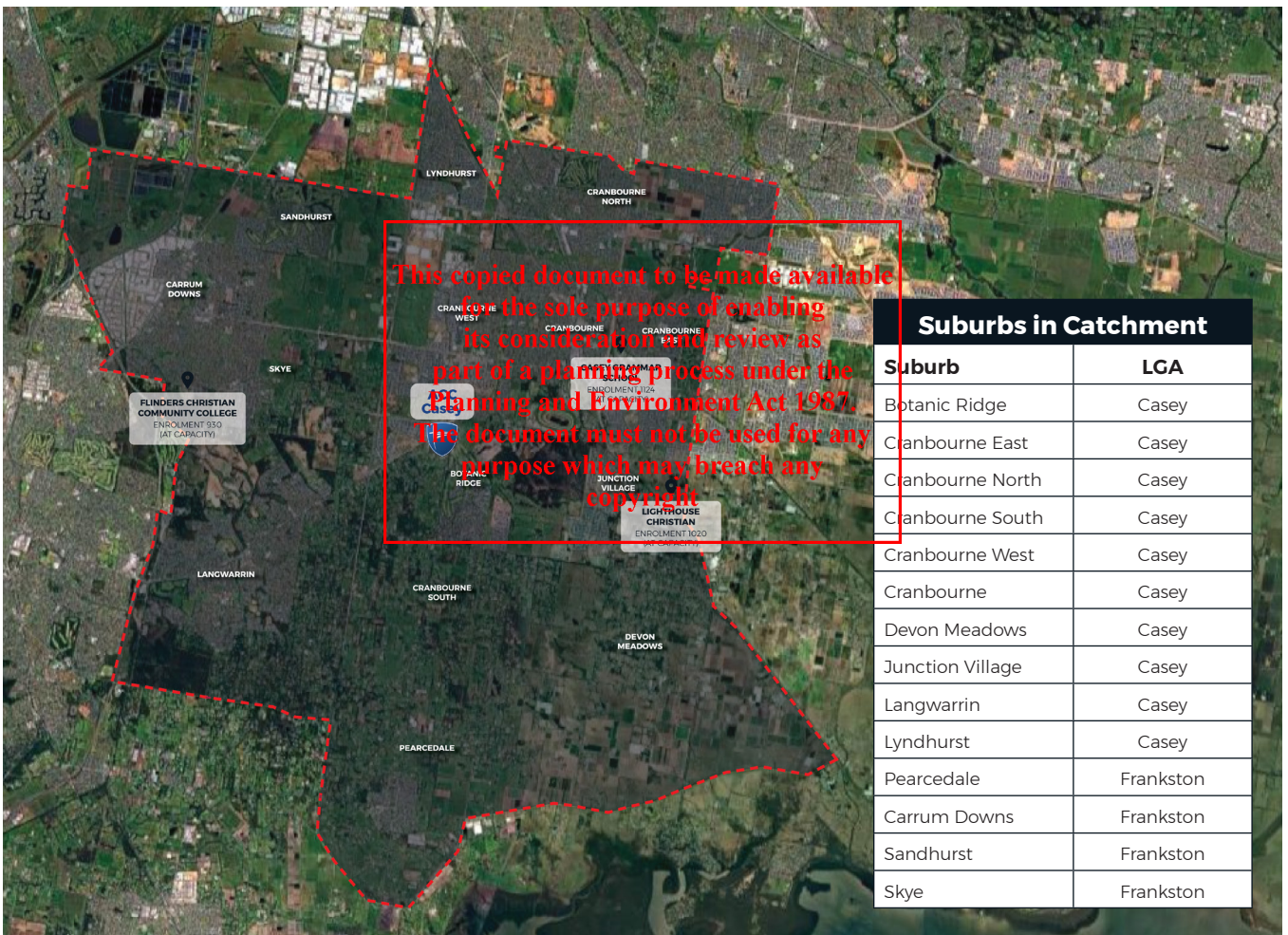
By analysing this data, we are better able to forecast enrolments at ACC Casey over the next 20 years.



# Defining the Catchment

- The current families of ACC Casey (in Skye) live an average of 10.2km from the school campus<sup>1</sup>.
- 78% of Primary School children currently travel less than 10km. (Travelling to school: Habits of Australian families, Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne, 2019)
- 82% of High School children currently travel less than 10km. (Travelling to school: Habits of Australian families, Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne, 2019)
- The average commute for educational purposes in Casey is 8.2km. (Victorian Integrated Survey of Travel & Activity, 2025)

## Catchment Map



This internal and external evidence indicates that, in an urban context, the practical catchment for our school will extend to a radius of approximately 10 kilometres. This reflects typical parental decision-making in metropolitan areas, where families generally prefer schools that are easily accessible within a short travel time. Using this radius ensures our projections for ACC Casey are both accurate and aligned with established patterns of school choice in similar urban growth corridors.

<sup>1</sup> Many families who reside closer to the new site have enrolled in recent years, in anticipation of the school moving, artificially inflating this average.

# Quantifying Current Students

To understand the existing education landscape and sectoral capacity, Table 1 summarises the schools within the proposed ACC Casey catchment, broken down by sector, along with their current enrolments. There are 25,849 students currently attending schools within the catchment, noting that additional students travel from the catchment to schools outside the area.

**Table 1**

Sector	Distance from School	Enrolments
<b>Public</b>		
Barton Primary School	2.2km	1108
Botanic Ridge Primary School	7.1km	410
Carrum Downs Secondary College	8.0km	899
Casey Fields Primary School (P)	6.9km	961
Cranbourne Carlisle Primary School	8.7km	593
Cranbourne East Primary School (P)	8.0km	1034
Cranbourne East Secondary College (C)	8.0km	1202
Cranbourne Park Primary School	5.3km	288
Cranbourne Primary School	5.7km	239
Cranbourne Secondary College	5.8km	2096
Cranbourne South Primary School (P)	2.2km	345
Cranbourne West Primary	4.4km	570
Cranbourne West Secondary College	4.4km	1202
Devon Meadows Primary School	8.1km	291
Elisabeth Murdoch College	7.1km	1573
Langwarrin Park Primary	6.0km	571
Langwarrin Primary	7.4km	655
Lyndhurst Primary School	6.4km	926
Lyndhurst Secondary College	8.4km	832
Pearcedale Primary	8.7km	711
Quarters Primary School	4.5km	390
Rangebank Primary	7.8km	341
Rowellyn Park Primary School	7.2km	751
Skye Primary School	5.0km	487
Woodlands Primary School	5.5km	885
<b>Total Public</b>		<b>19,360</b>
<b>Catholic</b>		
St Peters Cranbourne South	3.1km	1962
St Agatha's (P)	4.6km	508
St Judes School - Langwarrin	7.0km	281
St Therese's School (P)	7.8km	260
St Joachim's School	9.1km	324
<b>Total Catholic</b>		<b>3,335</b>
<b>Independent</b>		
Casey Grammar	6.2km	1124
Flinders Christian Community College	7.0km	930
Lighthouse Christian	9.0km	1020
ACC Casey	N/A	80
<b>Total Independent</b>		<b>3154</b>
<b>Total Students Enrolled in the Catchment</b>		<b>25,849</b>

Source: [myschool.edu.au](https://myschool.edu.au)

This table highlights the distribution of students across sectors and underscores the limited capacity of existing independent schools to accommodate future growth.

# Accounting for Population Growth

Table 2 summarises population forecasts for the suburbs within the ACC Casey catchment. By 2046, the total population is expected to increase by 31.6%, while the school-aged population is projected to grow by 44%. This growth equates to 16,512 additional school-aged children requiring access to education within the catchment.

**Table 2 - School-aged Children Forecast within Catchment**

Total Students	2021	2046	Growth
Botanic Ridge	1,587	4,183	2,596
Cranbourne	4,100	6,665	2,565
Cranbourne East	6,138	8,552	2,414
Cranbourne North	6,193	9,721	3,528
Cranbourne South	260	455	195
Cranbourne West	4,731	5,762	1,031
Devon Meadows	285	2,116	1,832
Junction Village	112	1,506	1,395
Lyndhurst	2,208	2,461	253
Pearcedale	712	716	4
Carrum Downs	3,947	4,897	950
Langwarrin	4,727	4,703	-24
Sandhurst	1,120	879	-241
Skye	1,764	1,778	14
<b>Total Students Living in the Catchment</b>	<b>37,884</b>	<b>54,394</b>	<b>16,512</b>
			<b>44%</b>

Source: id (informed decisions). (2024, August). City of Casey population forecast. City of Casey. Retrieved December 17, 2025, from <https://forecast.id.com.au/casey/>

NB There are 37,884 students living in the catchment, but only 25,849 attending school within the catchment. This is because:

- They can attend school anywhere; and so many travel outside this area.
- The population forecast includes 15-19 year olds, some of whom have left school.

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# Assessing Supply and Demand

Table 3 provides a summary of two key elements:

1. How many students will be in the catchment in 2046 (54, 394).
2. How many students would be in each sector in 2046.

In other words, if School choice was not restricted by available places, how many students would be in each sector. In this case, you would see 9,138 in the Independent sector. Given the growth in Independent schooling this is a conservative figure, nonetheless it is an effective way of gauging Schooling demand. Victoria's figures are largely in line with the other states.

**Table 3**

	<b>Victorian Sector Average</b>	<b>School Aged students in Sector 2046</b>
Public School Students	63.4%	34,486
Catholic Schools Students	19.9%	10,824
Independent Schools Students	16.8%	9,138
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>54,394</b>

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The independent schools within the ACC Casey catchment are all large institutions of around 1,000 students each. Potentially, they could reach 1,500 students, though we don't know their plans for student growth or their ability to add facilities.

- Casey Grammar
- Flinders Christian Community College
- Lighthouse Christian College.

## **Data Analysis:**

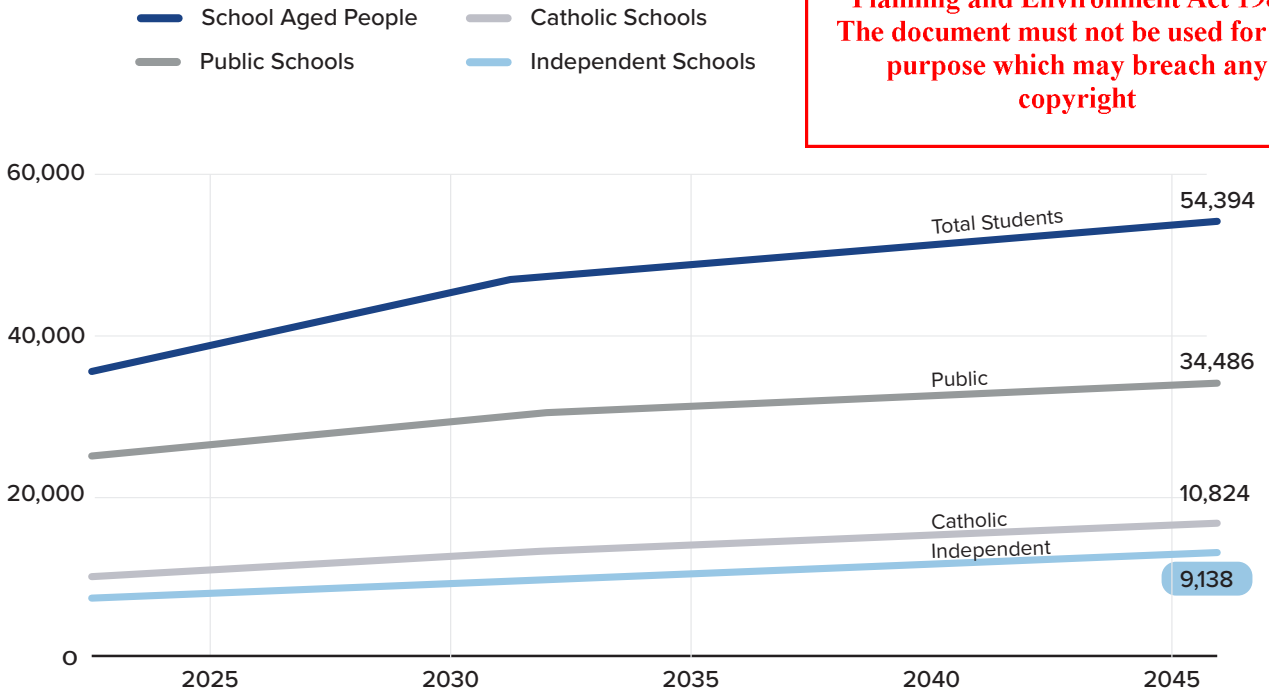
- At the moment these Independent schools currently have 3,074 students enrolled. Accounting for only 12.2% of students in the catchment, compared with the Victorian average of 16.8%. This indicates the sector is under-serviced.
- There is strong evidence there will be demand for 9,138 Independent School students in that catchment by 2046. The existing schools could potentially grow from 3,074 enrolments to 4,000-5,000 students but this is well short of the demand of 9,138.

## **Summary:**

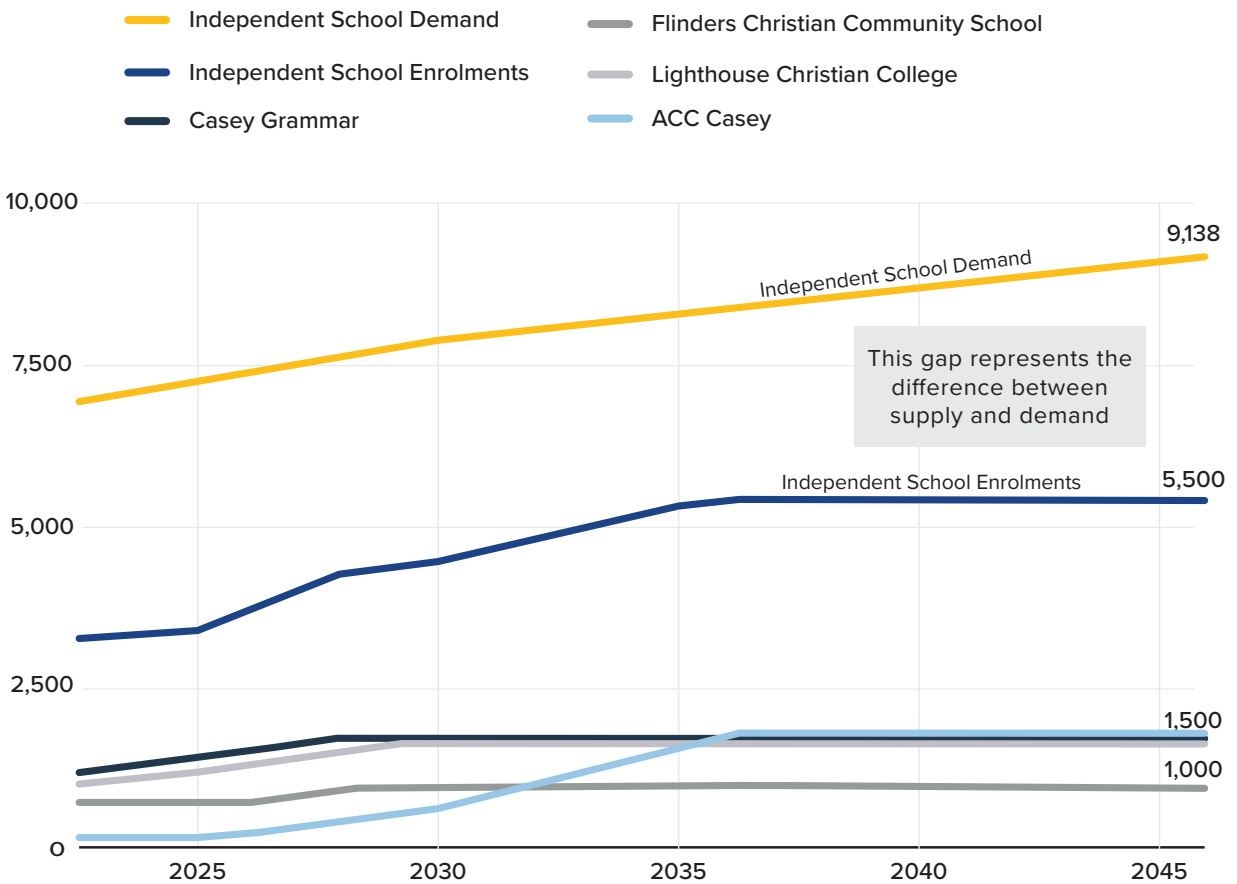
Taking into account all the data, there will be strong demographic growth and enough latent Independent School demand for a new P-12, low-fee Independent school to easily reach 1,500 students.

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**School Forecast Based on Victorian Average**



**Independent School Enrolment Forecast**

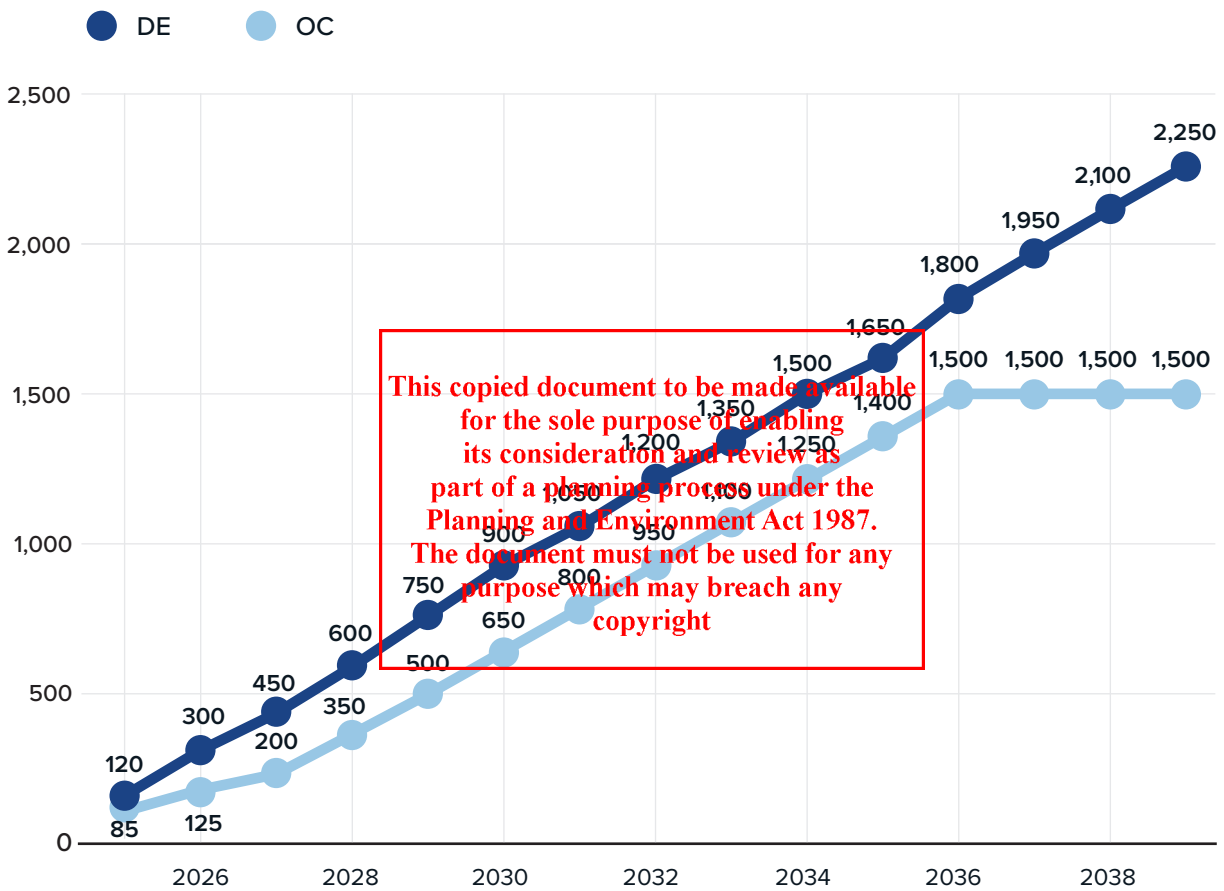


NB. We have assumed the current Independent Schools grow even further to test if they would accept all the demand. There appears to be no way that they can.

# ACC Casey Enrolment Forecast

Based on demographic analysis, sectoral demand, and capacity constraints within the catchment, ACC Casey is forecast to experience steady and sustained growth over the next two decades. Projections indicate enrolments will increase by approximately 150 students per year, reaching a total of 1,500 students by 2037. This growth trajectory reflects both the underlying population expansion and the strong parental demand for independent schooling in the City of Casey's Growth Area.

ACC Casey Enrolment Forecast - Distance Education (DE) and On-Campus (OC)



# Summary & Conclusion

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The proposed new school site is urgently required to meet the growing educational needs of families in the City of Casey's Growth Area and surrounds. Multiple data points confirm that the catchment area is facing a surge in population, coupled with a shortage of available Independent school places.

## **1. Population growth will drive significant student demand**

Victorian Government's planning data indicates that an *additional* 60,000 residents will settle within the school's catchment area over the next 20 years. The local population is forecast to grow by 32% by 2046, while the school aged population is set to grow even faster at 44%. This extraordinary increase highlights the need for proactive planning to ensure children have access to quality education close to home.

## **2. Existing schools cannot meet future demand**

There will need to be many new schools to keep up with the demographic changes. Plus demand for Independent Schools is growing across Australia. Without a new independent school, families seeking educational choice will be left without options, and state schools will face unsustainable pressure.

## **3. Suitable land for schools is scarce**

Land parcels large enough to host a school are increasingly difficult to secure in this growth corridor. Failure to act now will result in missed opportunities to establish much-needed educational infrastructure on an appropriate site.

## **4. A 1,500-student school is the appropriate scale of response**

The combination of strong, planned population growth, current enrolment pressure, and limited land availability clearly demonstrates that a 1,500-student school is not only justified but essential. This scale will enable the school to meet a substantial share of projected demand and, as demonstrated by recent new school examples in growth corridors, represents a viable model.

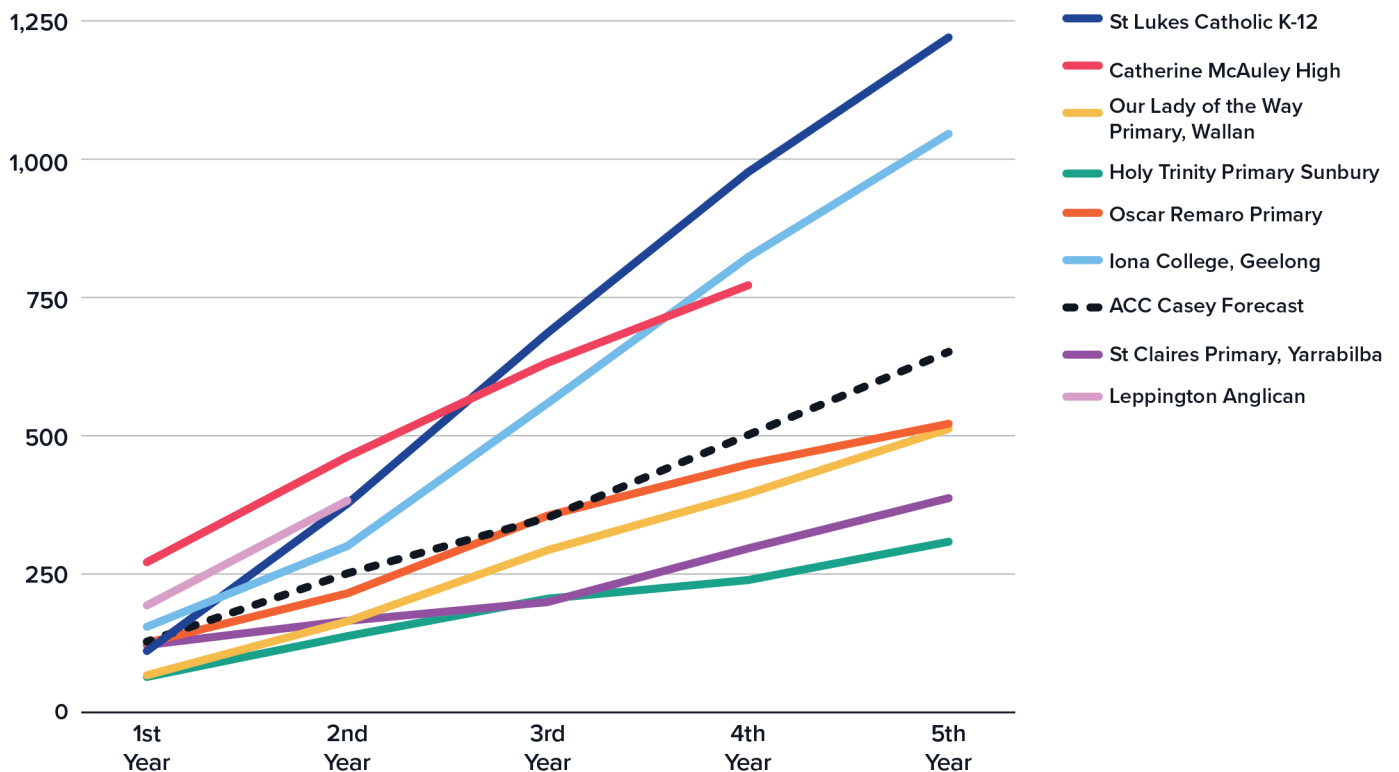
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# Appendix A - School Growth Comparison

The projected growth for ACC Casey is consistent with enrolment patterns observed in other high-growth corridors in Victoria and New South Wales. A review of seven recently established independent and Catholic schools shows that new schools in urban growth areas typically expand at a rapid pace, moving from foundation cohorts to over 1,000 students within a short timeframe.

The graph below illustrates this trend, highlighting the accelerated enrolment trajectories of these schools.

**Enrolment Growth of New Schools in Growth Corridors**



This comparative evidence reinforces the viability of ACC Casey's projected growth, demonstrating that in growth corridors with significant population increases and limited school capacity, new independent schools are quickly embraced by families seeking choice and quality education.

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## **Educational Necessity Report: Australian Christian College Casey**

- ***Desirability of 271-275 Pearcedale Road***

Our application supports Victorian Planning Provisions that favor the placement of non-agricultural community uses such as schools on the edge of the UGB. The site's frontage onto Pearcedale Road (a declared arterial link) ensures that high-volume school traffic is contained on the regional road network, preventing congestion within local residential precincts. This alignment with Clause 51.02 (Casey Planning Scheme) ensures the project is not only viable but represents the highest and best community use for this Green Wedge interface.

The selection of 271-275 Pearcedale Road is strategically underpinned by its size and close proximity to the existing student catchment and accessibility via arterial roads. At a distance of only 5.6km (approximately an 8-minute commute), the site relocation offers a reasonable transition for College families.

The site offers the requisite scale to accommodate the community demand for schools. By integrating the natural landscape into the campus design, the site directly supports our educational philosophy and the College Environmental Sustainability Action Plan. This location provides students with daily opportunities for environmental stewardship and meaningful engagement with the natural world, reinforcing the school's faith-based commitment to ecological care.

- ***Demand beyond current school supply***

Current educational capacity in the region is under critical pressure.

The City of Casey remains one of Australia's fastest-growing municipalities. Forecasts indicate a 76% population increase for the Botanic Ridge and Cranbourne South precinct, reaching an estimated 19,000 residents by 2046 (.id, 2024). Given the demographic profile of young families (averaging 3.2 persons per household), the need for expanded educational infrastructure is immediate and essential.

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Image 1.1 The City of Casey designated growth area and our school catchment overlap significantly (.id, 2024)

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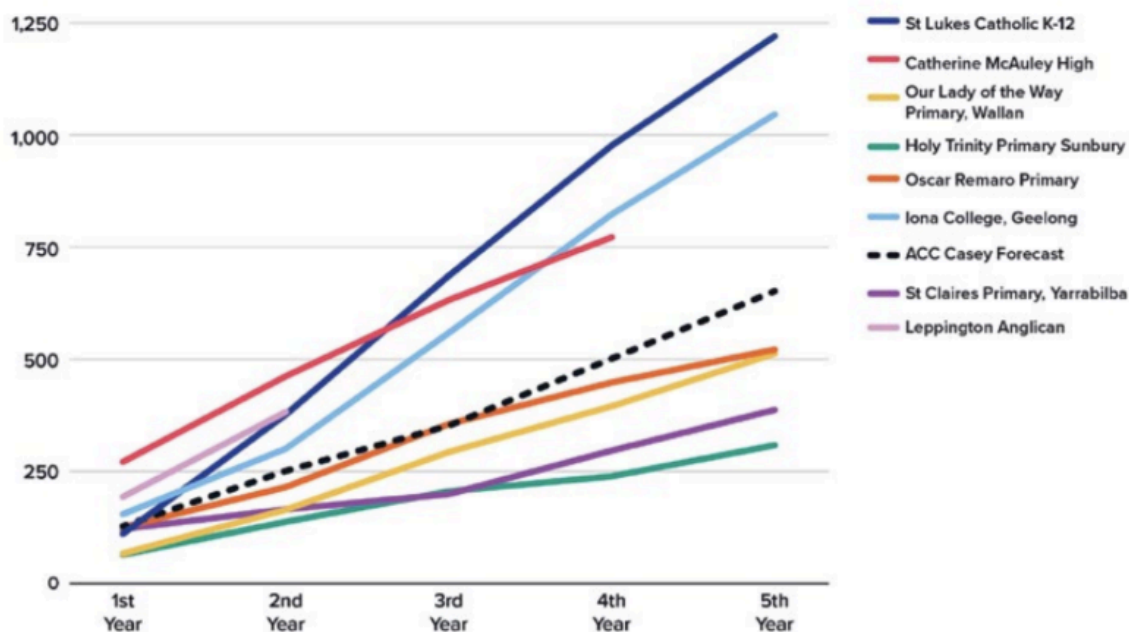


Image 1.2 Enrolment Growth of New Schools in Growth Corridors

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The graph above illustrates this trend, highlighting the accelerated enrolment trajectories of these schools.

This comparative evidence reinforces the viability of ACC Casey's projected growth, demonstrating that in growth corridors with significant population increases and limited school capacity, new independent schools are a community requirement.

- **Projected population growth**

The City of Casey is a primary growth corridor designated by the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA), with the Department of Transport and Planning identifying it as the third-highest growth area in the state. With a projected influx of over 60,000 new residents in the immediate pipeline, the College requires the scale of this specific site to accommodate a rapidly expanding student population.

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Source: id (informed decisions). (2024, August). City of Casey population forecast. City of Casey. Retrieved December 17, 2025, from <https://forecast.id.com.au/casey/>

### **Analysis of Existing Schools**

The 3 existing independent schools within the ACC Casey catchment are all large institutions of around 1,000 students each. These schools have some, although limited capacity to grow.

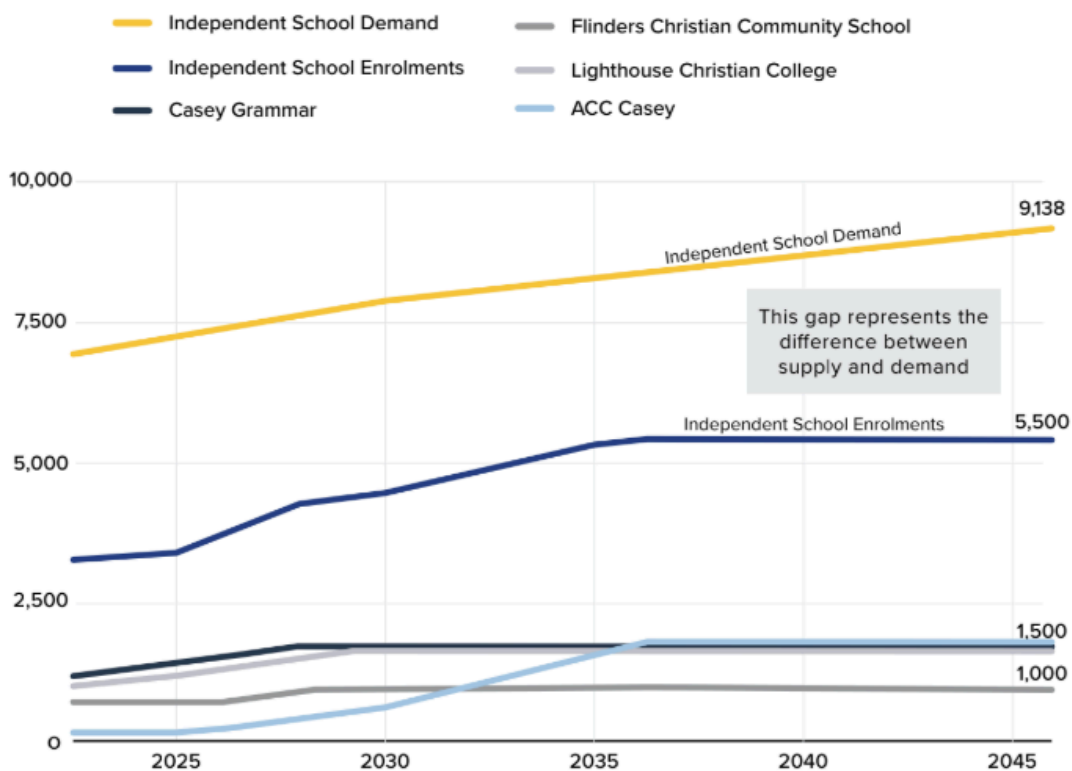
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The following table extrapolates the sector demand based on the population growth. This shows that the community demand for more independent schools will be very strong, with places needed for over 9,000 students.

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**Independent School Enrolment Forecast**



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Independent School Enrolment Forecast - City of Casey 2025

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Education › Regions › Victoria

## Outer suburbs fuel boom in independent school numbers, as gov schools grow by 0.5 per cent

Melbourne's booming growth corridors have delivered a stunning contradiction to Victoria's "education state" reputation, with independent schools welcoming hundreds of families choosing private over public.

Amelia Swan and Rebecca Borg

2 min read March 5, 2026 - 2:09PM

Herald Sun

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4 Comments

*Population growth and desire for choice has directly attributed to demand for independent schooling in Melbourne's growth corridors such as Cranbourne (Herald Sun, 2026)*

- **Available land for schools in this area - limitations**

As detailed in the City of Casey's Precincts Structure Plan areas (pictured below), the Cranbourne South precincts are nearing full residential "build-out," creating a high-density corridor where almost every hectare inside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) is now committed to housing (City of Casey, 2025).

This pre-allocation has resulted in a critical scarcity of large-scale institutional holdings within the urban zone, leaving a deficit of undeveloped parcels sufficient to accommodate a comprehensive

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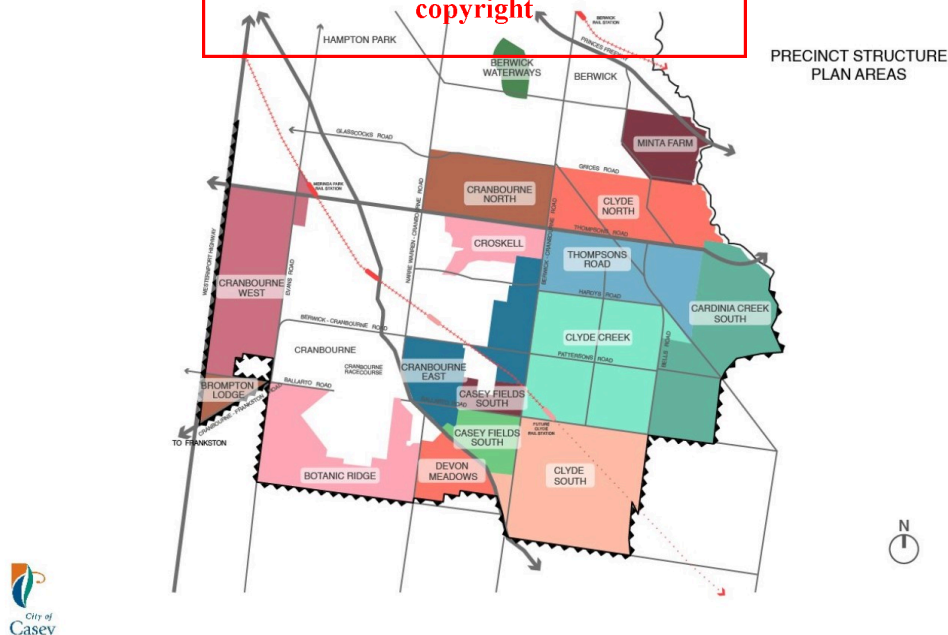


Image 1.5 - Precinct Structure Plan areas in the City of Casey (City of Casey, 2025)

Developing a school within the Urban Growth Boundary is further complicated by commercial realities. Land inside the boundary is priced for high-density residential yield, creating a significant financial barrier for the delivery of non-government educational infrastructure. By utilizing 271-275 Pearcedale Road, this project provides the necessary acreage for a high-amenity campus at a sustainable cost-base, while simultaneously ensuring that inner-UGB land is preserved for its primary purpose of housing delivery.

A site-gap analysis of the catchment area confirms that this consolidated 7.8-hectare holding is the only viable location that satisfies the three pillars of the Victorian Planning Provisions for interface schools:

- Direct Adjacency: Immediate proximity to the high-growth residential catchment it serves.
  - Arterial Infrastructure Synergy: With direct frontage to Pearcedale Road (a Transport Zone 3 arterial link), the campus is engineered to keep school-generated traffic on the regional road network. This prevents the "filtering" of heavy vehicles and buses through local residential streets, preserving the safety and amenity of the neighboring suburbs.
  - Defined Urban-Rural Interface: The low-intensity, master-planned campus design acts as a permanent landscape buffer between the residential density of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and the protected Western Port Green Wedge. By establishing an educational use with significant open space and setbacks, the College provides a sensitive, soft transition that protects the non-urban character of the land to the west and south.
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- **Location suitability**

The proposal directly responds to Guiding Principle 2 of the Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan. As the Botanic Ridge and Cranbourne South precincts reach residential 'build-out,' the provision of a high-quality P-12 campus is an essential local community need that must be met to ensure the provision of educational choice and capacity in the area.

Guiding Principles for the Casey Western Port Green Wedge	
<b>1</b>	Agriculture and horticulture will be encouraged and protected. Decisions on proposals for other types of land use and development will have regard to the primacy of agriculture and horticulture.
<b>2</b>	Local and State Infrastructure should respond to the key values of the Western Port Green Wedge, and any potential impacts on the values of the Green Wedge should be minimised and mitigated, while taking into account the needs of the local community.
<b>3</b>	Land uses should be located as directed by the District-based Strategic

Image 1.4 - Guiding Principles for the Casey Western Port Green Wedge (City of Casey, 2019)

By choosing a low-intensity institutional use over more intrusive commercial or agricultural alternatives, the project secures a net gain for the regional landscape. This

project delivers essential community services while functioning as a permanent, professionally managed buffer that protects the heart of the Western Port Green Wedge from urban encroachment (Butt et al. 2023). Every effort has been made to ensure that development does not detract from the environmental, landscape and scenic values of Green Wedge areas, as directed in the Casey Planning Scheme.

The school's master plan prioritises the slow maturation of the landscape, ensuring that this boundary remains a high-amenity, green transition space. By providing a functional transition between high-density housing and protected green space, the development serves as a strategic buffer that resolves the tension at the City of Casey's urban-rural interface. With activity concentrated during daylight hours and significant periods of site rest during weekends and term breaks, the institution respects the nocturnal and seasonal rhythms of the adjacent Green Wedge while securing the urban edge against future residential pressure.

### Strategic Transport & Accessibility Planning

A robust transport network is a fundamental enabler for student enrolment, particularly in a high-growth corridor. To overcome the site's Category 1 (low public transport) classification, the College operates a dedicated fleet of private buses servicing the surrounding outer-lying growth areas.

- Catchment Extension** The sole purpose of covering the Casey and Frankston areas ensures that students have a reliable and efficient way to commute, effectively extending the College's reach into new residential pockets that currently lack diverse educational options.
- Technology-Led Efficiency** This strategy is supported by an interactive feature on the School Website. Parents can view real-time bus locations, arrival times, and seat availability. This level of transparency encourages mode shift (moving students from private cars to buses), which directly aligns with the Green Travel Plan requirements of the City of Casey.

### 2. Infrastructure Integration

The campus is engineered to treat bus transit as a primary infrastructure component, inclusive of a dedicated bus terminal with five dedicated bus bays designed for 12.5-metre vehicles, ensuring that the fleet can load and unload safely without impacting internal car circulation or Pearcedale Road traffic. All bus movements are designed for "forward-entry and forward-exit," meeting the highest safety standards for school zones.

### 3. Parking and Scalability

The site provides ample parking for staff, parents, and community members. In accordance with Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) requirements, parking capacity is not static; it is planned to scale proportionally with each of the five stages of development.

- **Stage 1 Alignment:** Initial parking and drop-off zones are optimized for the 125-student opening.
- **Long-Term Capacity:** As the school grows to 1,500 students, the parking footprint will expand to ensure no spillover occurs onto Pearcedale Road, maintaining the operational integrity of the regional road network.

#### 4. Road Upgrades

Our commitment to a high-capacity private bus fleet directly justifies and supports the proposed channelised right-turn and auxiliary left-turn lanes on Pearcedale Road. These infrastructure upgrades are designed to:

- **Preserve Road Network Performance:** Ensure that even during peak enrollment periods, the College maintains the operational integrity of Pearcedale Road by facilitating seamless vehicle ingress and egress.
- **Minimise Community Impact:** By internalising traffic flow and providing dedicated acceleration and deceleration lanes, the development prevents queuing on the arterial network, ensuring that the surrounding regional transport corridor remains efficient and safe for all road users.
- **Align with Strategic Planning:** This approach fulfills the requirements of Clause 18 (Transport) and Clause 19.02-2L, demonstrating a proactive response to the traffic demands of a 1,500-student campus in a high-growth corridor.

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