
SCHOOL FEES AND CHARGES POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with “School Fees: Setting and Collection “CECWA Policy” available at www.ceo.wa.edu.au

RATIONALE

Catholic education is to be made available to all Catholic students whose parents seek a Catholic education for them, insofar as this is possible, while embodying the Church's special preference for the poor and disadvantaged. Schools have a responsibility to communicate the financial constraints under which they operate, to parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools. Parents are asked to make a commitment to support Catholic education financially by paying fees.

The Bishops of Western Australia have approved the collection of school fees from parents as a necessary contribution to the costs of delivering a Catholic education.

2. Definitions

2.1 School Fees:

- for the purpose of this policy statement School Fees shall be considered to be tuition fees, levies and other charges (e.g. excursions, camp fees, amenities, book hire)

2.2 Application for Enrolment Fee:

- the fee associated with processing an application for student enrolment into a school

2.3 Acceptance of Enrolment Fee:

- the fee associated with securing a student enrolment into a school after an offer of enrolment has been made by the school

2.4 Role of the School Boards:

- The School Board has a managerial role with regard to the setting and collecting of school fees

PRINCIPLES

1. To provide for the equitable collection of fees and charges from the parent community based on the Gospel values of justice and support for those in need.
2. Financial grounds shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from a Catholic school.
3. St Maria Goretti's Catholic School fee structure is directly related to the socio-economic status of the school community.
4. The St Maria Goretti's Catholic School Board has the responsibility for the financial management of the school and, consequently, is responsible for the collection of school fees.

5. The collection of school fees shall be approached in the spirit of Christian charity and justice.
 - 4.1 The School Board shall actively pursue the collection of school fees where parents have the capacity to pay fees.
 - 4.2 Requests for fee concessions should be raised with the Principal who will deal with the matter in confidence.
6. The inability to pay school fees is not a reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from St Maria Goretti's Catholic School.

PROCEDURES

1. Upon submitting an Application for Enrolment at St Maria Goretti's Catholic School, parents will be provided with the School's Fees and Charges Policy.
2. Any clarification needed by the parents and/or guardians about the school's fee policy shall be given at the initial enrolment interview. Acknowledgment of the fee collection procedures is on the 'Application for Enrolment' form which shall be signed by both parents and/or guardians. In the case of a sole custodial parent or guardian, one signature will suffice.
3. The Application Fee is a non-refundable fee of \$30.00 made payable on return of the Application for Enrolment form.
A further payment of \$150.00 will be paid upon Acceptance of the position at St Maria Goretti's Catholic School. This charge will be deducted from the First Semester school fees but otherwise is a non-refundable charge.
4. At St Maria Goretti's Catholic School there is a level of sibling discounts which shall be determined by the School Board.
 - a. *As a guide the following discount levels are suggested:*
 - i. 1st child – 0%
 - ii. 2nd child – 20%
 - iii. 3rd child – 40%
 - iv. 4th child and beyond – 100%
 - b. Kindergarten fees shall be charged as a proportion (eg 0.5 FTE) of the respective first child full time fee. Sibling discounts apply to kindergarten students.
 - c. All students and families are eligible for sibling discounts including families who receive automatic tuition fee discounts as holders of eligible means tested family concession cards.
 - d. The usual family discounts are offered for Funded Special Education students whether siblings attend the same Catholic school or other Catholic schools.
5. The fees timeline each year will be:
 - a. At the School Board Annual General Meeting the fees will be announced.
 - b. The School Finance Officer will prepare and issue a Fees and Charges Statement to each family by the end of Week Three Term One. Parents will have two options
 - i. To pay the annual amount by the end of week five Term One.
 - ii. To pay half of the annual fees at the beginning of each Semester.
 - c. All payments for fees and charges are made to the School Finance Officer or School Admin Officer.
The office is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 4.00pm.
 - d. The School Finance Officer will send a written reminder at the commencement of each term indicating the amount outstanding for that period.

- e. Fee statements are issued at the beginning of each semester.
- f. In Week 4 of the term a reminder statement is sent out to parents who have not paid their statement and require or entered into an agreement.
- g. In Week 7 of the term a letter is sent, requiring payment within 7 days or an appointment with the Principal is made.
- h. In Week 10 a notification is sent to each parent who has not paid fees by the principal explaining that matters would be handed over to a debt collector should no contact be made in relation to the matter.

The process for negotiating the method of payment and the provision of concessions and remissions is outlined below.

6. The process for applying for and developing an individual Fee Support Application:
 - i. The parent will arrange an appointment with the Principal to discuss the proposal.
 - ii. The Principal will assist the parent, if required, to develop a written Application for Fee Reduction and to collate supporting documentation.
 - iii. The School Board has empowered the Principal to consider Fee Reduction Applications and make a determination.
 - iv. Where the Fee Reduction Application is considered by the Principal and where:
 1. Accepted:
A letter of agreement will be exchanged to form the agreed way forward
 2. Declined:
The Principal will provide the opportunity for the parent to address his concerns and make a written submission to the School Board's Finance Committee.
 - v. School Board Finance Committee
Will consider the written submission and make a determination where
 1. Accepted:
A letter of agreement will be exchanged to form the agreed way forward
 2. Declined:
The parent will be notified in writing and provided with the opportunity to make a written submission to be presented to the School Board.
 - vi. Following the School Board's determination the decision will be communicated to the parent/s by the School Board.
 1. The Principal will subsequently meet with the parent/s to establish a timeline

Only the Principal and the School Finance Officer have access to the individual's name although at each stage of the process, as detailed above, those making the decision will be provided with the written application which includes the person's name.

7. The School Finance Officer will under the direction of the Principal maintain a list of outstanding fees/charges:
 - a. Timeline for Overdue fees will be:
 - i. Semester 1
 1. Week 3 Semester 1 - Annual Fee Statement issued.
 2. Payment due by end of Week 5.
 3. Reminders will be sent to parents at the end of Term 1 for payment by Week 2 Term 2.

4. Phone contact will be initiated commencing Week 5 Term 2.
 5. Those with outstanding accounts will be written to at the commencement of Week 7 Term 2
- ii. Semester 2
 1. Week 1 Semester 2 – Semester 2 statement issued.
 2. Payment due by end of Week 3.
 3. Reminders will be sent to parents at Week 4 Term 3 for payment by Week 7 Term 3.
 4. Collection procedures will commence after Week 8 Term 3.
8. Collection Procedures

The School Board reserves the right to engage outside agencies to recover outstanding fees with the costs ***incurred being the responsibility of the individuals concerned.***
9. The Principal may from time to time request financial information from families to support applications for fee concessions or any other concessions.