

St John's Primary School

Promulgated: 2008

Reviewed: 2015

To Be Reviewed: 2019

School Fees: Setting and Collection Policy



*St John's Primary School, as part of the Catholic faith community,
strives to provide a caring, compassionate and supportive environment,
where each person is valued and encouraged
to develop to his/her full potential.*



1. Rationale

The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) has a responsibility to make a Catholic education available to all Catholic students whose parents seek a Catholic education for them, insofar as this is possible, while embodying the Church's preferential option for the poor and disadvantaged (Mandate page 50).¹

St John's Primary School has a responsibility to communicate the financial constraints under which it operates to parents enrolling their children in this school as part of the system of Catholic schools in WA. Parents are required 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 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

2.3 Role of St John's School Board:

- in diocesan accountable schools, Boards or Councils have a managerial role with regard to the setting and collecting of school fees

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Catholic schools in Western Australia:

4. Principles

- 4.1 The collection of school fees shall be approached in the spirit of Christian charity and justice.
- 4.2 Financial grounds shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from a Catholic school.
- 4.3 The School Board has the responsibility for the financial management of the school and, consequently, is responsible for the collection of school fees.
- 4.4 Schools shall ensure that school fees reflect the socio-economic status of the school community.
- 4.5 Families with limited capacity to pay school fees have an entitlement to claim a fee concession. Requests for fee concessions shall be treated with dignity, fairness,



compassion and confidentiality.

- 4.6 Families with eligible means tested family concession cards have an automatic entitlement to tuition fee concessions. (HCC)
- 4.7 The withholding of access to students of normal pastoral and curriculum provision shall not be used as a fee collection strategy.
- 4.8 Every effort shall be made to protect the confidentiality of all information pertaining to parents and/or guardians and the payment of school fees.
- 4.9 Where parents and/or guardians have the capacity to pay fees, the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued.

5. Procedures

5.1 All CEWA schools shall have a written School Fees: Setting and Collection policy outlining the above principles, fee structures and collection procedures. Specific issues to be addressed are:

- a recognition of the Church's preferential option for the poor and disadvantaged
- the policy will be made available on the school website
- details regarding additional charges and information relating to fee concessions
- a process for negotiating the method of payment and the provision of concessions if required
- a timeline for the payment of accounts
- procedures following non-payment

- 5.2 This policy is to be updated regularly to reflect:
- a) any changes to the CECWA Policy statement 'School Fees: Setting and Collection'
 - b) any legislative changes
 - c) any community socio-economic considerations.

The principal may from time to time request financial information from families to support applications for fee concessions or any other concessions.

5.3 On application for admission parents and/or guardians will be provided with the school's fee policy (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 shall be 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.



Fee Setting

5.4 Annual fees and charges including maximum increases shall be set by the School Board in accordance with CECWA advice provided during the budget process each year.

5.5 Acceptance of Enrolment fees shall be reviewed annually by the school board during fee setting discussions for the following year's budget. Currently set at \$150 per family the funds collected are viewed as a donation to resources for the Early Childhood Centre.

5.6 Where circumstances beyond the control of parents result in an acceptance of enrolment not being fulfilled the principal shall give consideration to a refund of the Acceptance of Enrolment fee.

5.7 Diocesan accountable schools wishing to exceed the maximum increase in school fees and charges shall obtain the prior written approval of the Director of Catholic Education.

5.8 The CECWA decision regarding automatic tuition fee discounts for the holders of eligible means tested family concession cards shall be implemented. The fee level shall be communicated to schools by the Catholic Education Office during the budget process each year.

5.9 The level of sibling discounts shall be determined by the School Board. The following formula is a CEWA recommended guide for both primary and secondary schools.

1 st child enrolled	0%
2 nd child enrolled	20% of that child's tuition fee
3 rd child enrolled	40% of that child's tuition fee
4 th child enrolled and beyond	100% of that child's tuition fee

Kindergarten fees shall be charged as a proportion of the respective first child full time fee. Sibling discounts also apply to kindergarten students.

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.

5.10 All Catholic schools shall ensure that the usual family discounts are offered for Special Education students whether siblings attend the same Catholic school or a number of Catholic schools.

5.11 Consideration should also be given to family fee discounts in situations where families have children in more than one Catholic school although the provision of such discounts is not mandatory.

Fee Collection Procedure

5.12 Annual Fee Statements are issued early in first term. Payment options are as listed on accompanying 'Payment of School Fees' letter. (Appendix 1).



- Parents are requested to contact the principal if fees are likely to cause the family financial difficulty.
- An updated Statement is issued in term 2. Where no instalment has been received for term 1, a reminder is stamped on the account.
- Updated Statements continue to be issued early in each term. By late term 2, if no payment has been received, the family shall receive a phone call from the Principal in order to best understand their financial position and to work out a payment plan.
- By term 3, if required, a phone call is made by the Principal requesting a formal meeting. A Payment Plan Proforma (Appendix 2) is provided at this meeting.

Fee Collection

5.13 St John's principal shall ensure that, prior to legal action, all reasonable efforts have been made to contact parents and/or guardians in order to resolve fee payment issues. Where parents and/or guardians have ignored all reasonable attempts to negotiate a fee payment strategy and further action is required:

- documentation shall be kept on each attempt to resolve the problems of outstanding fees
- parents and/or guardians shall be notified that the services of a debt collection agency or solicitor shall be engaged to recover outstanding fees and any additional costs shall be added to the account in accordance with the School Fee Policy
- schools shall only engage the services of a debt collection agency or solicitor who undertakes to comply with the ACCC, Trade Practices Act (TPA) and ASIC Debt Collection Guideline: for collectors and creditors
- a General Procedure Claim (summons) can be issued by the appropriate school authority via the debt collection agency engaged and judgment entered against the parent. Before enforcement proceedings are taken, such as a Property Seizure and Sale Order, Earnings Appropriation Order, or any other enforcement action, written approval shall be obtained from the Director of Catholic Education (diocesan accountable schools).



PAYMENT OF SCHOOL FEES

Appendix 1

FEE COLLECTION

Annual Fee Statements are issued early in first term. The Statement includes all extra activities i.e. swimming lessons, dancing and surfing.

Where parents encounter hardship in meeting the fee levels set, an appointment must be made with the Principal to discuss alternative arrangements.

Students who are leaving throughout the year must advise the office in writing and any outstanding accounts settled prior to departure.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Option 1 One payment in full by the end of Term 1
- Option 2 (Default) Three payments by the end of Term 1, Term 2 and Term 3.
 Divide your Annual Fee by 3 to get each Term amount (Term
 Reminder Statements will then be issued at the start of each Term)
- Option 3 **Monthly instalments by arrangement with Administration**
 N.B. This option requires all fees to be paid by end of
 November.

All payment arrangements will need to be reviewed annually.

Paying by BPAY

This can be done either by telephone or internet banking through your financial institution. BPay reference can be located on your fee statement.

Payment by Direct Debit

Please collect a form from the office.

This allows your account to be automatically debited through the Catholic Development Fund at regular intervals.

Payment by Credit Card

Present your credit card at the office as per your chosen payment option below.

Health Care Card Discount

Families with a current Health Care Card will need to complete a form and present your card to the office.



Please return completed slip to office

PAYMENT OPTIONS *(please tick)*

- 1 One payment in full before the end of Term 1 { }
- 2 Three payments by { }
- End of Term 1
- End of Term 2
- End of Term 3
- 3 Monthly instalments **by arrangement** ()

Method of Payment *(please circle)*

Cash/cheque Credit Card *(through office)* B/Pay Direct Debit

Name of Parent/Guardian _____ Eldest Child's Name _____ Yr ____



ST JOHN'S SCHOOL SCARBOROUGH PAYMENT PLAN PROFORMA

Family Name: _____

Name of Parents/Guardian
Responsible for Fee Payment: _____

Balance of fees owing: \$ _____

- An amount of \$ _____ to be made at weekly / fortnightly intervals.
Start date _____
By way of Direct Debit through the Catholic Development Fund. (form provided)
or
- One lump sum of \$ _____ to be paid on the agreed date of _____

I/we agree to the above payment plan for outstanding fees owed to St John's School.

Signed _____ Date _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal _____ Date _____