St Mary’s School
To do ordinary things extraordinarily well

School Fees Setting and Collection

RATIONALE

St Mary’s School has the 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 special preference for the poor and disadvantaged. Parents are asked to make a commitment to support Catholic education financially by paying fees. This policy is formulated in accordance with the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia. 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.

DEFINITIONS

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)

Application for Enrolment Fee:
- the fee associated with processing an application for student enrolment into St Mary’s School

Acceptance of Enrolment Fee:
- the fee associated with securing a student enrolment into St Mary’s School after an offer of enrolment has been made by the school

Role of School Board:
- at St Mary’s School the School Board have a managerial role with regard to the setting and collecting of school fees

PRINCIPLES

1. The collection of school fees shall be approached in the spirit of Christian charity and justice.
2. Financial grounds shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from St Mary’s School.
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. St Mary’s School ensures that school fees reflect the socio-economic status of the school community.
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.
6. Families with eligible means tested family concession cards have an automatic entitlement to tuition fee concessions.
7. The withholding of access to students of normal pastoral and curriculum provision is not used as a fee collection strategy.

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.

9. Where parents and/or guardians have the capacity to pay fees, the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued.

**PROCEDURES**

1. 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.

2. On application for enrolment, parents shall be provided with the school’s fee policy. This includes details of any additional charges and information relating to the school’s fee concession policy. (Any clarification needed by the parents about the school’s fee policy can be given at the initial enrolment interview.)

3. The level of sibling discounts shall be determined by the School Board.

   CEO Recommendations:
   
   1st child 0%
   2nd child 20%
   3rd child 40%
   4th child & beyond 100%

4. Kindergarten fees shall be charges as a proportion (eg. 0.5 FTE) of the respective first child full time fee.

5. School Fee Accounts are distributed at the beginning of each term (4 per year).

6. Parents experiencing difficulty with payment of school fees are requested to discuss the matter with the Principal as soon as possible. If parents have a Health Care Card, or need to see the Principal in relation to their school fees, an appointment is required to make necessary arrangements. These appointments are strictly confidential and the arrangements agreed to must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

7. Where parents have ignored all reasonable attempts to negotiate a fee repayment strategy and further action is required, parents are notified that the services of a debt collection agency or solicitor will be engaged to recover outstanding fees.