

School Fees: Setting and Collection

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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 possible, while embodying a special preference for the poor and disadvantaged. The College has a responsibility to communicate the financial constraints under which it operates to parents enrolling their children. Parents are asked 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.

DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy School Fees shall be considered to be tuition fees, levies and other charges (e.g. amenities, subjects fees, camps, book hire, magazine etc)

Role of the College Board :

In diocesan accountable schools, Boards have a managerial role with regard to the setting and collection of school fees.

PRINCIPLES

1. The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia is responsible for ensuring the financial viability of group funded schools.
 2. The St Joseph's College Board has the responsibility for the financial management of the College and, consequently, is responsible for the collection of school fees.
 3. The collection of school fees will be approached in the spirit of Christian charity.
 4. The inability to pay school fees shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from St Joseph's College.
 5. The College Board shall ensure that school fees reflect the socio-economic status of the College community.
 6. Families with limited financial resources and means tested family concession card holders have an entitlement to claim some form of fee concession. Requests for fee concessions be treated with dignity, compassion and confidentiality.
 7. The withholding of access to students of normal pastoral and curriculum provision shall not be used as a fee collection strategy.
 8. Every effort shall be made to protect the confidentiality of all information pertaining to parents and the payment of school fees.
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PROCEDURES

1. Annual fees and charges, including maximum increases, shall be set by the College Board in accordance with Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia advice, provided during the budget process each year.
 2. If the College wishes to exceed the maximum increase in school fees and charges the College Board must obtain the permission of the Director of Catholic Education.
 3. On application for enrolment parents will be provided with the College's fee policy and a schedule of fees. Any clarification needed by parents about this policy can be sought during the enrolment interview.
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4. The following levels of sibling discount (tuition Fees only) are applicable for students enrolled at St Joseph's College :
 - 1st child 0%
 - 2nd child 20%
 - 3rd child 40%
 - 4th child and beyond : 100%Kindergarten fees will be charged as a proportion of the first child full-time fee (.4 FTE)
 5. The CECWA decision regarding automatic tuition discount fee discounts for holders of eligible means tested family concession cards shall be implemented. The fee level shall be communicated to the College by the Catholic Education office during the budget process each year. Eligibility will be discussed during the enrolment process and will be communicated to eligible families enrolled at the College.
 6. Where an offer of a place is made, parents/guardians will be required to pay a deposit (\$250) to secure this place. This fee will be taken off the school fees in the year that the student commences at the College. It is a non-refundable fee.
 7. At the time of enrolment parents will sign a fee agreement with the College.
 8. Fees are payable within 14 days of receipt of account. No refund is applicable to a student who leaves part way through a term. A term's notice for any student leaving the College is required, otherwise full fees for the following term will be payable.
 9. Where a student enters the College during the year, fees will be charged on a pro-rata basis.
 10. Accounts will be sent out three times a year – Term One, Two and Three.
 11. Some parents may be eligible for the Secondary Assistance Scheme. Forms and further information may be obtained from the College Office.
 12. Parents who have difficulties paying fees should contact the College Business Manager or the College Principal to negotiate a payment schedule and provision of concessions, if required.
 13. Where parents have the capacity to pay fees, the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued.
 14. Where parents 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 are notified that the services of a debt collection agency or solicitor will be engaged to recover outstanding fees and the associated costs will be at the parents expense.
 - a summons can be issued by the appropriate school authority and judgement entered against the parent. Before enforcement proceedings are taken, such as a Warrant of Execution, Order of Commitment, Garnishee Order and Judgement Summons, approval must be obtained from the Director of Catholic Education.
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