



Star of the Sea Primary School Fee Policy

Originally written: 2012
Reviewed: 2017

RATIONALE:

Star of the Sea school supports The Catholic Education of Western Australia (CEWA) in its 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. Star of the Sea school has a responsibility to communicate the financial constraints under which they operate, to parents enrolling their children in the school. Parents are asked to make a commitment to support the school's education programme 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 (eg excursions, camp fees, amenities, book hire etc.).

PRINCIPLES:

1. All schools shall have a direct relationship between school fees and the socio-economic status of the school community.
2. The School Board has the responsibility for the financial management of the school and, consequently, is responsible for the collection of school fees.
3. The School Board shall actively pursue the collection of school fees where parents have the capacity to pay fees.
4. The practice of charity requires that requests for fee concessions be treated with dignity, compassion and confidentiality. For example, recipients of social welfare benefits have an entitlement to claim some form of fee concession.
5. The inability to pay school fees shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School.
6. The withholding of services to students will not be used as a fee collection strategy.
7. Every effort shall be made to protect the confidentiality of all information pertaining to parents and the payment of school fees.
8. 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 shall be treated with dignity, compassion and confidentiality

PROCEDURES:

1. Setting of Annual Fees

The School Annual fees and charges including maximum increases shall be set by the School Board using guidelines in accordance with advice provided by the CEWA. The School Board will set annual fees and charges including maximum increases during the budget process each year.

2. **Application Fee**

On application for enrolment parents will 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. **Discounts**

The School Board shall determine the level of sibling discounts. The following discount levels apply:

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| 1st child | 0% |
| 2nd child | 20% |
| 3rd child | 40% |
| 4th child & beyond | 100% |

Family discounts will be offered for Special Education students whether siblings attend Star of the Sea or another Catholic school.

The CEWA decision regarding automatic tuition fees discounts for the holders of eligible means tested family concession cards shall be implemented. The fee level shall be that which is communicated to schools by Catholic Education Western Australia during the budget process each year.

A family with a concession card is entitled to a discount on tuition, amenities and building levy.

If you do not have a concession card the discounts only apply to tuition fees. They do not apply to any other component of the school fee account e.g. amenities, building levy, etc.

4. **Kindergarten Fees**

Four Year Old Kindergarten fees shall be charged at a percentage of a first child fee rate. This percentage must meet or be working towards 60% tuition of a full time 1st child. The normal discounts apply to second, third and fourth child fees.

Three Year Old Kindergarten Fees are charged on the basis of "User Pays" as we receive no funding to provide this programme. Income must cover the cost of staff salaries and some resources. Fees are paid on account on a term by term basis. Children may enrol in the programme from the day they turn three. Mid-term enrolments will be calculated on a day by day possible attendance basis and a modified account will be issued. In the event of a family withdrawing their child mid-term, you will be required to give 4 weeks' notice in writing. Any remaining weeks of the term will be charged at 50% to the family school invoice.

5. **The Composition of the School fees.**

Annual fees charged can be found on the schedule that is announced at the Annual School Community meeting in November. Fees comprise the following:

a) **Tuition Fees:**

Tuition fees are allocated to the various Learning Areas to support the teaching and learning programs provided by the school. If starting mid-term a calculation of the fee will be made based on the number of weeks attendance.

b) **Building Levy:**

The Building Levy is charged on a per family basis. Payments to the school building fund are used for the purpose of debt servicing loans and providing for the future capital development of the school. All schools in the Catholic Education system must pay into a central co-responsibility fund to assist in the on-going development of all schools.

c) **P & F Levy:**

This levy is collected by the P & F via the school fee account to limit fundraising during the course of the year. In co-operation with the Principal and School Board the P & F develops a set of priorities for the year and these are funded according to need.

d) Amenities Fee:

The Amenities Fee is charged per child. The money is used to purchase a wide range of textbooks, stationery, art and craft materials and other sundry items consumed by the children during the course of the year.

- **Insurance Levy:** Provides 24 hours a day, 365 days a year world-wide cover for accidents. This provides for a total cover up to \$500,000 for items not already covered by Medicare. Please note this fee is an annual charge and does not pro-rata for families starting part way through the year.
- **Computer Levy:** A Computer levy will be charged and added to the School Fee account. Four-year-old Kindergarten children will be charged 3/5 of the levy on the basis that they attend three days per week. Students in Year 4 to 6 will have a small additional charge for leasing their Ipad. They will also have the option to purchase outright at the end of the lease.
- **Swimming:** Swimming will be charged to the school fee account for PP – Y6 students.
- **Incursions / Excursions:** A standard amount for excursions and incursions are charged to the school fee account.
- **Speech / Occupational Screening:** This is charged to the school fee account for all Kindergarten students.

e) Education Packs:

The Education Pack includes all the necessary aspects which enable students to deliver a full comprehensive curriculum (also includes Mathematics and Spelling Mastery). This will be charged to the school fee account.

f) Camp Fees:

Year 6 camp fees will be approximated and charged at the beginning of the year.

g) Application for Enrolment Fee:

A \$35 (GST inc) Application Fee is charged to ensure places sought are bona fide. All applications attract the Application Fee.

h) Acceptance of Enrolment Fee:

A \$50 fee is charged to secure places which will then be deducted from the tuition fees for the year.

6. Terms of Payment:

School Fees are payable within 21 days from receipt of statement. A 5% discount is offered on the tuition fees component only (not Building Fund or Amenities Fee) to families who pay the full annual amount by the date set at the AGM the previous November. If this option is not exercised, then the school fees are payable over the three invoices cycle that cover the full school fees for that year. If these arrangements are not able to be met, other options for payment can be negotiated by the family with the Principal.

School Fees must be paid in full by 31 October of each year. An annual fee account will be sent to all families in February with three options of payment. These are:

- One payment made in full within 21 days of the account being issued. If this option is taken there is a 5% discount on the Tuition component of the total account.
- A payment arrangement agreed to that can be paid weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly and finalises the school fee account by the 31 October.
- School fee annual account paid in four equal instalments at the beginning of each term.

Reminder statements will be sent at the beginning of Term 2, 3 and 4.

If these arrangements are not able to be met, other options for payment can be negotiated with the Principal.

Payments Options:

Fees may either be paid in cash, cheque, EFTPOS (Master, Visa, American Express), Direct Debit or B-Pay. Credit card payments can be made over the telephone. Forms for direct debit can be obtained from the office. There are no additional charges for the use of Credit cards.

7. Collection of Outstanding Fees:

In accordance with the C.E.W.A. School Fees: Setting and Collection, further strategies and procedures are available to the school to facilitate the collection of outstanding school fees. Where parents have ignored all reasonable attempts to negotiate a fee repayment strategy and further action is required:

- a) Written communication shall be sent to parents, bringing promptly to their attention the outstanding balance.
- b) If there is no response within 14 days, an appropriate person(s) shall approach the parents on a personal basis, in a sensitive, discreet and confidential matter.
- c) If the personal approach cannot be made, or no action results from it within the 14 days, a formal registered letter from the school Principal should be used to remind parents of their financial obligations.
- d) Should there be no response or action within 14 days of the letter, the school Principal shall send a formal registered letter with a final notice, seeking payment and outlining the possible outcomes, including legal action, which could occur if payment is not received within the specified timeframe.
- e) If, despite this last letter, there is no response or action the Principal may approve to engage the services of a debt collection agency to recover outstanding fees and any additional costs.
- f) Schools shall keep comprehensive documentation of each attempt to resolve the problems of outstanding fees.
- g) Under no circumstances can a child enrolled in a school be refused on-going enrolment because their parents have not paid fees.
- h) In the event of a family separation the balance of fees and incidentals incurred, remain the responsibility of both parties unless a court approved order is received by the school stating otherwise.

8. Reimbursement of fees:

In the event of a family withdrawing a child from the school mid-term, there will be no reimbursement of fees paid in advance for that term. Reimbursement will be made for any remaining full terms.

Fees paid on an annual basis will be reimbursed for any remaining full terms.

If the annual fee was paid and thereby attracted a discount, reimbursement may be offered but a re-calculation will be carried out so that the discount is cancelled. Individual cases will be treated on their own merits and the Principals decision will be final.

9. Mid-term enrolment:

A family enrolling a child mid-term will be charged for the number of weeks remaining in that term.

10. Enrolment:

No family will ever be refused a place in the school because of financial difficulties. Families experiencing hardship are invited to approach the Principal to discuss their circumstances and to arrange mutually satisfactory terms for payment. Requests for special terms must be negotiated each year.