



Topic: School Fee: Setting and Collection

Policy No: 2 C12

Policy Area: STEWARDSHIP

Originally Released: 2006

Date of review : 2018

Date for Review: 2021

Principal: MRS KERRIE MERRITT

1. RATIONALE

Assumption Catholic Primary school supports 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). Schools have a responsibility to communicate the financial constraints under which they operate to parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools. 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. DEFINITION

2.1 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 School Boards or School Councils:

- in diocesan accountable schools, the School Board has a managerial role with regard to the setting and collecting of school fees

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to Assumption Catholic Primary School, Mandurah

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 CECWA shall ensure the financial viability of group funded schools.
- 4.4** The School Board, has the responsibility for the financial management of the school and, consequently, is responsible for the collection of school fees.
- 4.5** Schools shall ensure that school fees reflect the socio-economic status of the school community.
- 4.6** 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.
- 4.7** Families with eligible means tested family concession cards have an automatic entitlement to tuition fee concessions.
- 4.8** The withholding of access to students of normal pastoral and curriculum provision shall not be used as a fee collection strategy.
- 4.9** Every effort shall be made to protect the confidentiality of all information pertaining to parents and/or guardians and the payment of school fees.
- 4.10** Where parents and/or guardians have the capacity to pay fees, the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued.

5. 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 CECWA. 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%

The CECWA 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 the Catholic Education Office during the budget process each year. Discounts only apply to Tuition fees. They do not apply to any other component of the school fee account eg Building Levy, Amenities, etc.

4. Kindergarten Fees

Four Year Old Kindergarten fees shall be charged at 60% of a first child fee rate (based on 20% per day of program offered). The normal discounts apply to second, third and fourth child fees. CECWA policy states Kindergarten fees shall be charged as a proportion (eg 0.6FTE) of the respective first child full time fee. Sibling discounts apply to kindergarten students.

Three Year Old Kindergarten Fees are charged on the basis of "User Pays" as no funding is received to provide this program. 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 program 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. Family discounts do not apply for Three Year Old Kindergarten students.

5. The Composition of the School fees:

Annual fees charged can be found on the schedule that is announced at the Annual General Meeting 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.

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 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, the P & F develops a set of priorities for the year and these are funded according to need. Matters will be referred to the School Board on a needs basis.

d) Amenities Fee:

The Amenities Fee is charged per child. The money is used to purchase and maintain a wide range of textbooks, stationery, art and craft materials and other sundry items including IT (Information Technology) and associated costs utilised by the children during the course of the year.

e) Application for Enrolment Fee:

A \$40 (GST inc) Application Fee is charged to ensure places sought are bona fide. If the place available is not accepted the Application Fee is not refundable in order to cover costs of printed materials associated with an application.

f) Acceptance of Enrolment Fee:

A \$200 fee is charged to secure places which will then be deducted from the first semester's tuition fees for the year. This fee is not refundable once the position has been accepted.

g) Sacramental:

This will be charged to the school fee account and contribute to the cost of medallions, certificates and a retreat.

h) Swimming:

Swimming will be charged to the school fee account for PP – Yr Six students.

i) Excursions:

Excursions are charged to the school fee account as a part of the Amenities Fee.

j) Year Six Graduation Jackets:

Year Six graduation jackets will be charged to the school fee account.

k) Camp Fees:

Year Six camp fees will be invoiced separately.

l) Annual Levy:

An Annual levy will be charged to the school fee account for Yrs PP – Y6. This fee covers the supply of school Year Book, exercise books, Making Jesus Real books and the license fee for Matheletics.

6. COLLECTION OF FEES

- 1) Initial fee invoices, stating the annual fees payable, are to be sent to parent/guardian during Week Two, Term One in Semester One.
- 2) A breakdown of component amounts and their due dates is to be incorporated into this annual statement.
- 3) The second fee invoice, stating the balance of annual fees owing and the due date, are to be sent to the parent/guardian during Week Three, Term Three in Semester Two to families who have not maintained their payment plans. Notices are placed in the Newsletter and The Happenings to remind families of payment dates.
- 4) Fees must be paid within 21 days of their due dates.
- 5) Parents/Guardians who have not paid their fees within 21 days of the due date will be issued with an "Overdue Notice". This notice will show the amounts overdue together with a reminder that Variations are available and that an appointment can be arranged to discuss them.
- 6) If fees are still not paid within 21 days of the "Overdue Notice" and no agreement regarding Variations has been made, then a "Final Demand" will be sent. The "Final Demand" notice must again detail the amounts overdue, the fact that Variations are available and the involvement of a collection agency if fees are not paid within a further 21 days.
- 7) If fees are still not paid and no attempt has been made by the parent/guardian to discuss the situation, then the debt is to be handed over to a Collection Agency.
- 8) The final decision to involve a Collection Agency is at the sole discretion of the Principal.
- 9) Once the debt is handed over to a collection agency, the school will have no further involvement in the collection process.
- 10) During all stages of the process, proper and accurate documentation shall be kept on each attempt to resolve the problems of outstanding fees by the School Administration Staff.
- 11) The Principal can, at any time, request the services of the School Board Treasurer or Chairperson to assist in the collection process.
- 12) A summons can be issued by the appropriate school authority and judgement entered against the parent/guardian; however, before proceedings are taken, such as a Warrant of Execution, Order of Commitment, Garnishee Order, Judgement Summons etc., approval must be obtained from the Executive Director of Catholic Education.
- 13) Any fees not paid in one year will accumulate onto the next year's fee account. This can only be waived at the discretion of the School Principal.

- 14) Approval of write offs, discounts and rebates: Discounts, rebates, exemptions, and the write-off of debts in relation to School fees and levies should be approved by the School Board, or the Principal on delegated authority.
- a. The Principal has the delegated authority from The Assumption CPS School Board to 'Write Off' a bad debt to a maximum of \$1500, with out consultation with the School Board. These Write Off will be presented to the Finance Committee.
 - b. The Finance Committee will present the School Board an Annual Report listing: Write offs, rebates, discounts and exemptions.

Variations to the Fee Collection Policy

Recognition exists of the Church's preferential option for the poor and disadvantaged and it is also a belief that every family can contribute to fee payments. With this in mind, variations to the Fee Collection Policy are made by mutual agreement between the parent/guardian and the Principal.

The school's fee collection will also be in accordance with:

- a) The discounts applicable to the Catholic Education Policy regarding Health Care Card holders and Pensioner Concession Card holders.
- b) The discounts applicable in the tuition fee for multiple family enrolments from pre-primary to Year Six. A copy of the current fee structure is presented to families at the time of enrolment, at the Annual General Meeting of the school Board each year or as requested by a family.
- c) The inclusion of a year-level levy for educational costs that are consistently incurred by parents throughout each year and are of a compulsory nature. A schedule showing the nature and amounts of each educational cost are forwarded to parents when they receive their initial fee invoice for the year.
- d) As from 2018, the family fee discount will apply for families attending Mandurah Catholic College Secondary school and Assumption Catholic Primary School. This discount will be calculated across the two schools. The cost of this discount will be shared across the two schools.
- e) If a family has students attending multiple Catholic Schools in the Peel Region: MCC, St Damien's CPS, St Joseph's Pinjarra and St Joseph's Waroona; the same family discount will be applied across the schools. The cost of this discount will be shared across the applicable schools.

Any variation must be documented in writing and be signed by both the parent/guardian and the Principal. It is the School's responsibility to monitor and follow up on all variations.

Any variations given are applicable only for the current school year; they do not automatically carry forward to the next school year.

Failure to adhere to the terms of the variation will result in the variation becoming Null and Void. The result is that all outstanding fees will become immediately payable and that the normal fee collection policy will apply.

Payment Methods

- EFTPOS
- Cheque
- Cash
- Direct Debit
- BPay
- Lump sum payments: yearly, per semester, monthly, fortnightly and weekly options are available.

7. 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. Individual cases will be treated on their own merits and the School Board's decision will be final.

8. MID TERM ENROLMENTS:

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

9. 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.

10. REVIEW

Year Of Review	Reviewed by:	Amendments/ review
2006	ACPS School Board	Originated
2010	ACPS School Board	Review
2014	ACPS School Board	Review and Reformatted
2018	ACPS School Board	Review
2021		Next review