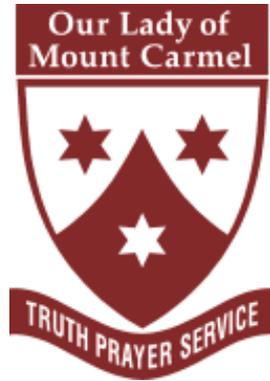


# Our Lady of Mount Carmel School



## SCHOOL FEES SETTING & COLLECTION POLICY

## **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 special preference for the poor and disadvantaged. 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 as a necessary contribution to the costs of delivering a Catholic education.

## **DEFINITION**

For the purposes of this policy School Fees includes the total cost of educating a child and comprises of tuition fees, levies and other charges (eg excursions, camp fees, amenities, swimming lessons etc).

## **ROLE OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

As a Diocesan accountable school, Our Lady of Mount Carmel School Board has a managerial role with regard to the setting and collecting of school fees in accordance with the policies and guidelines of CECWA.

## **PRINCIPLES**

1. Schools shall ensure that school fees reflect the socio-economic status of the school community, in the context of policy rationale.
2. Financial grounds shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from a Catholic school.
3. The collection of school fees shall be approached in the spirit of Christian charity and justice.
4. The withholding of access to students of normal pastoral and curriculum provision shall not be used as a fee collection strategy.
5. Families with limited capacity to pay school fees have an entitlement to claim a tuition fee concession. Requests for fee concessions shall be treated with dignity, fairness, compassion and confidentiality.
6. Families with eligible means tested family concession cards (Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card) have an automatic entitlement to tuition fee concessions.
7. The confidentiality of all information pertaining to parents and/or guardians and the payment of school fees shall be maintained, as mandated in legislation.
8. Where parents and/or guardians have the capacity to pay fees, the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued.

## **FEE SETTING**

Annual school fees are set by the School Board during the budget process each year. Increases in total school fees are made in accordance with the maximum increase parameters set by the CECWA.

School fees are announced to the school community at the Annual General Meeting held in November each year. The schedule of fees is subsequently published on the school's website.

## **APPLICATION FEE & ENROLMENT DEPOSIT**

A non-refundable Application Fee of \$50 must be paid when submitting an application to attend Our Lady of Mt Carmel School. Once offered a place, an Enrolment Fee of \$250 must be paid to confirm acceptance of a place. This Enrolment fee will be refunded on the first fee statement; however, it is non-refundable should the position be accepted and then later declined.

## **FEE DISCOUNTS**

### **Sibling Discount**

Family discounts are available according to the following schedule:

- Second child: 20% off the second child's tuition fee.
- Third child: 40% off the third child's tuition fee.
- Additional children: Fourth + child, tuition is free.

There is no sibling discount for students enrolled in 3 Year Old Kindy.

### **Kindergarten Fees**

Kindergarten fees are charged as a proportion of the respective Year 1 fee, based on the FTE of the Kindergarten operated by the school.

### **Concession Discount**

The Health Care Card Concession Scheme provides an automatic fee concession for holders of eligible means tested family concession cards (Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card). Application forms are available from the school office.

## **FEES AND PAYMENTS**

1. School fee accounts are generated annually in the first half of Term 1, at which time parents are required to commit to their chosen payment arrangement by the date stated in the Fee Statement. A Statement/Reminder will be issued in Term 2, 3 and 4 as required.
2. Payment options are:
  - a. One annual payment – due on 31 March
  - b. 2 instalments – due on 31 March & 30 September
  - c. 3 instalments – due on 31 March, 31 July and 31 October
  - d. 8 Monthly instalments commencing 16 March
  - e. 17 Fortnightly instalments commencing 16 MarchPayment options and amounts are included in the Fee Statement.
3. Fees for the school year are required to be settled in full by 31 October.
4. Fees may be paid in cash, cheque, Direct Debit, B-pay or EFTPOS.
5. Direct debit payments can be made from your nominated bank account or credit card for 8 monthly or 17 fortnightly instalments.
6. Contact will be made with parents/guardians if they have not returned their Payment Option Advice Form back to the school and/or no payment of school fees has been made by 31 March.
7. If parents are experiencing financial difficulty paying their fee account, then an appointment must be made with the Principal to discuss their circumstances and to arrange a mutually satisfactory terms for payment. Requests for special terms must be negotiated each year.
8. A family enrolling a child at the School during the year will be charged for the remaining weeks of the school year.
9. 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.
10. When the school office is notified that parents have split/separated, the child's fee account and contact/emergency details will be updated to reflect the situation. Responsibility for the Fee Account will be split evenly between the people who have signed the Confirmation of Enrolment Form, unless otherwise advised in writing by both parents.

## **COLLECTION OF OUTSTANDING FEES**

1. Written communication sent to parents, bringing promptly to their attention the outstanding balance.
2. If there is no contact made by the parents or payment made within 14 days then the Principal will be notified and a formal registered letter with a final notice, seeking payment and outlining the possible outcomes, including legal action, if payment is not received within 14 days.

3. If, no response or action is received following the second letter, the School Board may approve to engage the services of a debt collection agency or solicitor to recover outstanding fees or any associated costs.
4. In the event that the debt collection agent is not successful, the School may consider initiating court proceedings. The Executive Director of Catholic Education will be informed if such a decision is made.
5. Before any enforcement proceedings are undertaken, such as a Property Seizure and Sale Order, Earnings Appropriation Order, or any other enforcement action, including the launching of a caveat on a property, the School will obtain written approval from the Executive Director of Catholic Education.
6. Documentation will be kept on each attempt to resolve the problems of outstanding fees.
7. Under no circumstances can a child enrolled in a school be refused on-going enrolment because their parents have not paid fees.

## **REFERENCES**

1. CECWA – School Fees: Setting and Collect Policy