



**Sacred Heart
Primary
School
Highgate**

Policy:

School Fee Collection Procedures

Originally released: 2022

1.0 Rationale

Catholic Education Western Australia Limited (CEWA) has been established by the Bishops of Western Australia as the governing body for Catholic schools and offices in Western Australia. The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) is the board of directors for CEWA. Appointed by the Bishops of Western Australia, the Commissioners ensure that CEWA is giving effect to the Bishops Mandate for Catholic Education, the System Agreement with the State Minister for Education and all the relevant legislation and regulation.

The Executive Director of CEWA is appointed by the Bishops of Western Australia. The Executive Director has authority through CECWA Policies and CECWA's Delegations of Authority and is responsible for enabling each Principal to design and safely deliver the educational programmes to each student in their community of faith.

CEWA 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 (Bishop's Mandate). 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.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 School Fees:

For the purpose of this procedure, School Fees shall be tuition fees, levies, and other charges (e.g., amenities, technology levy, excursions, camps etc.)

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 Advisory Council ("SAC")

In diocesan accountable schools, the SAC has an advisory role regarding the setting and collecting of school fees.

3.0 Procedures

On application for admission, parents and/or guardians will be provided with the School Fee Collection Procedures (any clarification needed by the parents and/or guardians about the School Fee Collection Procedures shall be given at the initial enrolment interview). Acknowledgment of the School Fee Collection Procedures shall be on the 'Application for Enrolment' form which shall be signed by both parents and/or guardians. In the case of a sole custodial parent or guardian, one signature will suffice.

3.1 Setting of Annual Fees

The School Annual Fees and Charges including maximum increases, shall be set by the Principal in consultation with CEWA. The SAC will endorse Annual Fees and Charges (including maximum increases) during the budget process each year, using guidelines in accordance with the advice provided by CECWA. Similarly, the school fees will be reviewed annually by CECWA based on changes to the eligibility income thresholds, and will be communicated to the Principal during the budget process each year.

3.2 Application Fee

A \$55 (GST inc) Application Fee is charged to ensure places sought are bona fide. The Application Fee is not refundable, in order to cover costs of printed materials associated with an application.

3.2. Acceptance Fee

Should a place be offered and accepted, a \$300 fee is charged to secure the place. This fee is not refundable once the position has been accepted. This fee will be deducted from the tuition fees for the year once the student commences at the school. Should a student not commence at the school as anticipated, the \$300 will not be refunded.

3.3 Sibling Discounts/Eligible Means Tested Concession Cards

The following sibling discount levels currently 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 CECWA during the budget process each year.

Families with limited capacity to pay fees could request a fee concession. Requests for any fee concessions shall be treated with dignity, fairness, compassion, and discretion. The Principal may however, from time-to-time request financial information from parents/guardians to support any application for fee concessions or any other concessions.

3.4. Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Fees (Pre Kindergarten)

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. Children may enrol in the program from the day they turn three years of age. Mid-term enrolments will be calculated on a day by day possible attendance basis, and a modified account will be issued. Family discounts or eligible means tested concession cards do not apply for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten students.

Enrolment into the Three Year Old program does not guarantee formal ongoing enrolment into the School. An application for ongoing enrolment in the School will be required to be completed.

4.0 The Composition of the School fees

Annual fees charged will be detailed on the schedule that is announced at the Annual General Meeting held in November of each year. Fees comprise the following:

4.1 Tuition Fees:

Tuition fees are allocated to the various Learning Areas to support the teaching and learning programs provided by the school.

4.2 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.

4.3. Amenities Fee:

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

4.4 Technology Levy:

The Technology Fee is charged per child. This fee covers all costs associated with Digital and Technology Learning.

4.5 Excursion/Camp Levy:

The Excursion levy is charged per child. This levy covers all costs associated with excursions and incursions. Year 6 students will incur a cost for Camp.

4.6 Insurance:

Whilst at school, students are covered by Catholic Church Insurance.

4.7 Parents & Friends Association Levy ("P&F"):

This levy is collected by the Parents & Friends Association 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 SAC on a needs basis.

4.8 Other Fees and Charges

Other fees and charges that may be incurred include but are not limited to Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy Screening (Kindergarten students), Sacramental Fees (Year 3, 4 and 6), School Magazine (charged per family).

4.9. Enrolment of Student on Visas and International and Overseas Full Fee-Paying Students

Applications for students on a visa, will be considered in conjunction with existing and current policies as set by CEWA. In addition to all the documents listed on the application, the application will need to be accompanied by the original passport and visa documentation. Different conditions are associated with enrolments involving visas and are updated on a regular basis.

For International and Overseas Full Fee-Paying Students, the school is unable to claim any State or Commonwealth funding and as a result, in addition to the current school fees and charges that apply, additional fees to cover the costs for this funding will apply. The school is guided by CEWA policies with regards to the additional fees.

5.0 Collection of Fees

Initial fee invoices, stating the annual fees payable, will be sent to parents/guardians at the commencement of the year, and at the end of every term thereafter. Initial fee invoices will be accompanied by a Payment Commitment Plan, requesting families/guardians to sign and commit to a regular payment plan. Various payment options will be provided to ensure that all families/guardians are able to opt for a payment plan best suited to their needs, to enable them to meet their commitments. In order for the School to plan and meet its financial commitments, it is strongly encouraged and recommended that families sign a direct debit agreement.

Regular reminders and notices will also be placed in the Newsletter to remind families of their financial commitments.

Fees and charges must be paid within 14 days of their due dates. Parents/Guardians who have not paid their fees within 14 days of the due date will be contacted by phone to discuss the overdue fees and various payment options available, and to advise that an appointment can be arranged with the Bursar or Principal to discuss them.

If an arrangement to discuss the overdue fees cannot be made or no action results after another 14 days, a formal registered letter from the Principal will be sent to remind parents/guardians of their financial obligations. This letter will include an invitation to discuss the outstanding fees within a specified timeframe.

Should there still be no response after 14 days of the registered letter, then a final registered letter of notice of will be sent, including an advice that should the overdue fees not be paid, and no attempt has been made by the parent/guardian to discuss the situation, the debt will be handed over to a Debt Collection Agency and/or Solicitor.

The final decision to involve a Debt Collection Agency and/or Solicitor is at the discretion of the Principal. A decision to do so, will be addressed with the SAC.

Once the debt is handed over to a Debt Collection Agency and/or Solicitor, the school will have no further involvement in the collection process, and any additional legal costs shall be added to the fee account in accordance with the School Fee Collection Procedures. The Principal may consider initiating court proceedings through a General Procedure Claim, to obtain Judgement and advise the Executive Director of CEWA in writing.

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.

6.0 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal, Leadership and Administration Teams in consultation with the guidelines provided by CEWA and CECWA.