

ST. BERNARD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Fees: Setting and Collection Guidelines

Developed 2013
Reviewed 2021
Next Review 2022

Conscious that we have a responsibility to make Catholic Education available to all Catholic children, the School Advisory Council of St Bernard's School Kojonup will, when setting fees, ensure they will be affordable and in line with the recommendations of CEWA.

Our approach to fee collection will respect the dignity of each person and their ability to pay. Confidential fee arrangements for families who are facing short or long term hardship will be arranged through the Principal.

For the purpose of this policy statement School Fees shall be considered to be tuition fees, levies and other charges (e.g. excursions, amenities).

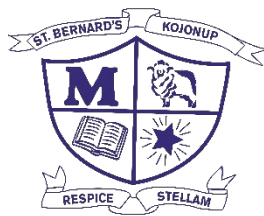
Principles:

- The collection of school fees shall be approached in the spirit of Christian charity and justice.
- Financial grounds shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from a Catholic school.
- The School Board has the responsibility for the financial management of the school and, consequently, is responsible for the collection of school fees.
- Schools shall ensure that school fees reflect the socio-economic status of the school community.
- 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.
- Families with eligible means tested family concession cards have an automatic entitlement to tuition fee concessions.
- The withholding of access to students of normal pastoral and curriculum provision shall not be used as a fee collection strategy.
- Every effort shall be made to protect the confidentiality of all information pertaining to parents and/or guardians and the payment of school fees.
- Where parents and/or guardians have the capacity to pay fees, the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued.

Procedures:

- Fees will be set by the school board, following the recommendations of CEWA during the annual budget process and circulated to parents with payment options prior to the commencement of a school year.
- On application for admission parents and/or guardians will be provided with the school's fee policy (any clarification needed by the parents and/or guardians about the school's fee policy shall be given at the initial enrolment interview). Acknowledgment of the 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.
- Fees for the whole year including all levies, amenities and outstanding amounts will be distributed during the first 3 weeks of Term 1.
- In Terms 2, 3 and 4 reminder accounts will be distributed to families as appropriate.

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- A range of options for fee payment will be offered to parents as well as the opportunity to negotiate individual Fee payment plans.

Discounts on tuition will be offered to families as follows

Second Child	-	20%
Third Child	-	40%
Fourth Child	-	100%

Kindergarten fees shall be charged as a proportion (eg 0.4 FTE) of the respective first child full time fee. Sibling discounts apply to kindergarten students.

All students and families are eligible for sibling discounts including families who receive automatic tuition fee discounts as holders of eligible means tested family concession cards.

Consideration will also be given to family fee discounts in situations where families have children in more than one Catholic school.

Collection of outstanding fees:

Where a family has not met their obligations in regard to payment of fees and has not approached the Principal for fee relief the following procedure will be adopted:

- The Principal will write to the family inviting them to meet and discuss the outstanding account (Letter 1)
- If unsuccessful a second letter will be sent outlining the course of action to be taken
- If still unsuccessful and the amount is in excess of \$500.00 the matter will be referred to a Debt Collector.
- St. Bernard's will only engage the services of a debt collection agency or solicitor who undertakes to comply with the ACCC, Trade Practices Act (TPA) and ASIC Debt Collection Guideline: for collectors and creditors
- A General Procedure Claim (summons) can be issued by the appropriate school authority via the debt collection agency engaged and judgment entered against the parent. Before enforcement proceedings are taken, such as a Property Seizure and Sale Order, Earnings Appropriation Order, or any other enforcement action, written approval shall be obtained from the Executive Director of Catholic Education.
- The Principal will retain documentation on each attempt to resolve the problems of outstanding fees.

Should there still be no payment forthcoming the Board will refer to directions from Catholic Education WA regarding appropriate means to pursue debt further. This will be examined on a case by case basis.

Related Documents

CEWA 2-C12 School Fees: Setting and Collection Policy

ACCC, Trade Practices Act (TPA)

Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC)

Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC) Debt Collection Guideline: for collectors and creditors

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