



ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL ROCHESTER

Excellence in Education Provided in a caring Catholic Community

SCHOOL FEES POLICY

RATIONALE:

Fees for education in a Catholic school are an in-built component of the total funding of Catholic Education. School fees are charges to assist in meeting the day-to-day operating costs of the school. This Fee Policy has been developed in accordance with the School Fees Policy from the Sandhurst Diocesan Schools Board.

A proportion of the funding for St Joseph's comes from the Commonwealth and State Governments. The remaining proportion of the funding is raised through private financial contribution to supplement the Government's contribution.

The major source of this private financial contribution is the School (or Family) Fee which is supplemented with other contribution, such as the Capital Fee, the Student Fee, fund raising activities and the use of voluntary helpers.

Relevant Vision Statement:

At St. Joseph's Rochester we believe: With Jesus as our model we are inspired to nurture and extend kindness

- Providing support for those in need within our school community and beyond.

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the responsibility of St Joseph's Primary School:

- to charge school fees in order to assist in meeting its financial needs
- to collect the school fees in a manner which is just and equitable.

<i>POLICY GUIDELINES:</i>	<i>GUIDELINE INDICATORS</i>
When Parents/Guardians/Carers enrol their child at St Joseph's Primary School, a signed commitment is given to pay school fees.	The enrolment form provides space for the Parents/Guardians/Carers to sign.
When setting fees, St Joseph's takes into account the school's financial needs and the ability of the school community to meet the level of fees to be charged.	<p>The school budget reflects an accurate assessment of fee income after remissions, discounts, special concessions etc, have been excluded.</p> <p>Fees are set as part of the budgeting process.</p> <p>Fees are sufficient to cover Local Contribution Deduction Factors and other budgetary needs.</p>
St Joseph's provides to parents full details of fees and charges for the coming year.	In the final term of the preceding year parents are advised via newsletters, handbooks and/or information meetings of the schedule of fees for the coming year.
A Student Levy is charged on a per student basis to meet student classroom requisites and to support the curriculum.	<p>The Student Fee is generally expended within the first term.</p> <p>All classroom fees and subject levies are reported in the Annual Financial Statement as compulsory tuition charges collected.</p>
<p>Families who have a Health Care Card are eligible to receive the Education Maintenance Allowance from the State Government. This is paid twice per year, one portion of each payment goes to the family and the other to the school.</p> <p>EMA - Families can elect to have their portion directed to the school which is then deducted for their fee.</p>	The school portion of the Education Maintenance Allowance is credited against each family's fees and levies and the totals reported in the Annual Financial Statement as State Government Recurrent Grants.
If a student leaves St Joseph's during the year, some fees may be rebated	<p>Student Levy: Rebate ½ Student Fee if student leaves in the first 5 weeks of Term 1. No Student Fee will be rebated if the student leaves after the first 5 weeks.</p> <p>Annual Fee: Pro-rata rebate according to number of weeks attended.</p> <p>The Principal's discretion may be used at times in this matter.</p>

<p>If a student is enrolled at St Joseph's during the year, pro-rata fees will apply.</p>	<p>Student Levy: Full Student Fee will be charged if a Student commences during Term 1 and Term 2. Swimming portion of Student Fee will not be charged if the Student has not participated in this program. 60% of Student Fee will be charged if a Student commences during Term 3 and 30% of Student Fee will be charged if a Student commences during Term 4.</p> <p>Annual Fee: Pro-rata charge according to number of weeks remaining in school year.</p> <p>The Principal's discretion may be used at times in this matter.</p>
<p>St Joseph's supplies fee accounts to parents regularly throughout the school year.</p> <p>To assist parents/guardians/carers to meet their responsibility to pay their fees, St Joseph's offers a variety of regular and convenient payment options.</p>	<p>Fee statements are issued no later than one month after the commencement of each year.</p> <p>Statements are issued on a regular basis thereafter.</p> <p>The school offers a range of payment options: cash, cheque or electronic transfer.</p> <p>The school offers a range of payment schedules: weekly, fortnightly, monthly, per-term or lump sum.</p> <p>By the beginning of the school year, each family is to have indicated in writing how they wish to pay their fees. (Refer to Appendix I)</p>
<p>For families who experience significant financial difficulty, Fee Support is available.</p>	<p>Requests for Fee Remissions can be submitted or sought throughout the school year. The principal can use discretion when appropriate.</p> <p>When dealing with requests for fee remissions, St Joseph's proceeds with the utmost discretion, ensuring strict confidentiality at all times.</p> <p>Approval of fee relief is restricted to the Principal (in consultation with the Canonical Administrator).</p>
<p>At St Joseph's, the recovery of unpaid fees must be approached sensitively to protect all parties from public embarrassment.</p>	<p>Unpaid fees are followed up promptly by letter or personal contact.</p> <p>Guidelines on outstanding fee collection are set out in Appendix II.</p>
<p>For families with fees long overdue for payment, the principal may employ the services of a Debt Collector and/or Solicitor to assist in recovering monies due, when it appears the parent/guardian/carer is able to meet the payment but is unwilling to do so.</p> <p>Such action will require the prior approval of the Canonical Administrator</p>	<p>Schools regularly monitor school fee collection.</p> <p>Fees overdue for payment at the end of the school year are marked for action, including the option of being placed with a debt collection agency or solicitor in an effort to have the overdue account finalized.</p> <p>Proper approval has been obtained prior to any external collection action being commenced.</p>
<p>The institution of court proceedings to recover unpaid debts may only be proceeded with after approval to do so has been sought and obtained from the Canonical Administrator and the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education.</p>	<p>St Joseph's Primary School, with the approval of Canonical Administrator and the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education will instigate court action to collect outstanding fees.</p>

REFLECTIVE MATERIAL:

Catholic Education Commission Victoria Policies and Guideline

Sandhurst Diocesan Schools Board School Fees Policy or Recommendations

Ratified: April 2011

Minor Review: 2013

Major Review: 2015

St Joseph’s Primary School School Application for Fee Remission

In order for St Joseph’s Primary School to consider an application for fee remission, we ask that you fill in this form. All information will be treated in strictest confidence with only the Principal having access to the completed form. If you require assistance in filling in the form please contact the Principal.

NAME:		DAYTIME PHONE:	
ADDRESS:		P/CODE:	

Employment Details:		
	YOURSELF:	YOUR PARTNER:
Name:		
Employer:		
Position		

Children Attending St Joseph’s		Other Dependants:		
NAME:	YR LEVEL:	NAME:	AGE:	HOME/NAME OF SCHOOL:

Are you eligible for the Education Maintenance Allowance?: Yes/No

Please provide your reasons for seeking Support through a Fee Remission.

Please indicate:

- **what you consider to be an affordable amount for your school fees.**

- **the level of Fee Support you are looking for.**

- **how you would like to pay your account balance.**

Name:			
Signed:		Date:	

Thank you for completing this form. Please return to the school office in an envelope marked "For the Attention of the Principal."

Office Use Only:

Application Approved/Rejected

Remission Amount \$ _____ **Signed:** _____

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL FEES & LEVIES

APPENDIX II – OUTSTANDING FEES COLLECTION PROCEDURE (sample only)

Where parents who are clearly able to afford but unwilling to pay fees, every effort must be made to help those parents understand their financial obligation. It becomes a matter of justice to the other parents and students that they should meet their commitments. The recovery of unpaid fees must be approached humanely and sensitively to protect the child as much as possible from the public embarrassment that could arise. Appropriate pastoral procedures should be initiated to ensure justice to all parents regarding their contribution.

The following process is a guide to assist schools in collecting outstanding fees. Some schools may wish to make personal contact as an initial step.

STEP 1 - Reminder Letter No 1 - sample Appendix II

STEP 2 - Reminder Letter No 2 - sample Appendix II

STEP 3- Personal contact ie phone call

- noting previous correspondence and lack of response
- offer opportunity for appointment to discuss repayment plan
- obtain commitment to appointment and/or repayment plan

STEP 4 - Final Demand Letter - sample Appendix II

STEP 5 - Place debtor in hands of debt collection agency

- if no response, and permitted by local fee policy, account must be placed with Debt Collection Agency
- Canonical Administrator must approve

STEP 6- Proceed to Legal Action

- proceed only after all avenues of collecting overdue amount have been explored
- Canonical Administrator must approve
- Director of Catholic Education must approve in writing

APPENDIX II – REMINDER LETTER NO 1 (sample only)

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Dear

Our records show that your school fees are now overdue. Could you please attend to this matter by settling the account. Should your family be experiencing financial difficulties please make an appointment to discuss the situation.

A copy of the account is attached for your information.

Yours sincerely

Principal

APPENDIX III(b) – REMINDER LETTER NO 2 (sample only)

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Dear

Further to our earlier correspondence regarding your account for school fees, we advise that the account is well overdue and your early attention to this matter is required.

Payment by pre-arranged instalments is acceptable.

Fee concessions may be granted in cases of financial hardship or where other special circumstances exist. If this is the case please contact me to arrange an interview to discuss this matter.

It would be appreciated if you could attend to this matter by XXXXXXXX.

Yours sincerely

Principal

APPENDIX III(c) – FINAL DEMAND LETTER (sample only)

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Dear

It is disappointing to find that there has been no response to previous letters regarding your account for school fees. We advise that the account is well overdue and your immediate attention to this matter is required.

Prompt settlement of the account is now required by XXXXXXXX. Should you be unable to do so please contact me so we may discuss this matter. Payment by pre-arranged instalments is acceptable.

Failure to respond by the above date will leave us with no choice but to place your account with our Debt Collection Agency.

Yours sincerely

Principal