



SCHOOL FEES: SETTING AND COLLECTION

Kolbe Catholic College – Administration

March 2015

RATIONALE

Kolbe Catholic College 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.

DEFINITIONS

School Fees:

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

Application for Enrolment Fee:

The fee associated with processing an application for student enrolment into a school.

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.

Role of School Board:

In diocesan accountable schools, the Board has a managerial role with regard to the setting and collecting of school fees.

PRINCIPLES

1. The collection of school fees shall be approached in the spirit of Christian charity and justice.
2. Financial grounds shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from a Catholic school.
3. The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) shall ensure the financial viability of group funded schools.
4. The School Board has the responsibility for the financial management of the school and, consequently, is responsible for the collection of school fees.
5. Schools shall ensure that school fees reflect the socio-economic status of the school community.

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.
7. Families with eligible means tested family concession cards have an automatic entitlement to tuition fee concessions.
8. The withholding of access to students of normal pastoral and curriculum provisions shall not be used as a fee collection strategy.
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.
10. Where parents and/or guardians have the capacity to pay fees, the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued.

PROCEDURES

1. On completion of the expression of interest for enrolment parents and/or guardians will be provided with the College's current fee policy. These can also be found on the College website. Any clarification needed by parents and/or guardians about the policy shall be given at the initial enrolment interview. Acknowledgement of the fee collection procedures shall be on the 'Acceptance of 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. ***In the event where parents split bill or change payer responsibility for fees this must be conveyed to the College in writing. All parties must complete and sign an 'Enrolment Form – Shared Family Details.'***
2. Annual fees and charges including maximum increases shall be set by the College Board in accordance with CECWA advice and confirmed by the College Board at the Annual General Meeting in November of the preceding year.
3. Application for Enrolment fee shall be \$50.00 and will be non-refundable.
4. Acceptance of Enrolment fee shall be \$750.00 and will be deducted from the first semester's tuition fees in the year of enrolment. Where circumstances beyond the control of parents result in an acceptance of enrolment not being fulfilled the Principal shall give consideration to a refund of the Acceptance of Enrolment fee. Where circumstances are within parents control the fee will be non-refundable.
5. Parents/Guardians who hold eligible means tested family concession cards will receive fee discounts under the HCC Tuition Fee Discount Scheme in accordance with CECWA guidelines. The maximum fee level is communicated to schools by the Catholic Education WA during the budget process each year. Government Secondary Assistance scheme is also offered to families with eligible concession cards. Concession cards must be presented to the Accounts Department and necessary paperwork completed.
6. All students and families are eligible for sibling discounts including families who receive automatic fee discounts as holders of eligible means tested family concession cards. The level of sibling discounts set by the College Board and reviewed on an annual basis are:
 - First child enrolled 0%
 - Second child enrolled 15% of that child's tuition fee
 - Third child enrolled 50% of that child's tuition fee
 - Fourth child enrolled and beyond 100% of that child's tuition fee

Siblings must be enrolled concurrently at the College to receive the applicable discounts.

7. Fee discounts shall only apply to tuition fees and not to any other levies and charges.
8. At the beginning of the College year, parents/guardians will receive a statement outlining their child/ren's annual tuition fee, curriculum levy and any other associated levies and charges. Camps and retreats will be invoiced separately due to GST implications and must be paid in full to the College prior to the designated activity. Statements will be issued at the beginning of each term by email.
9. A range of options is available to parents/guardians to pay the annual fees and charges:
 - **Option 1 – Direct Debit.**
Payment of account by weekly, fortnightly or monthly payments automatically to the College from a nominated bank account under agreement with the College. Account must be finalized by 31 October, in each year.
 - **Option 2- Payment in full by the due date.**
A 5% discount applies to the tuition fee only if the total of the invoice is paid on or before 28 February, in each year.
 - **Option 3 – Payment in four instalments (per Term)**
The first instalment is to be paid by 28 February, the second by 31 May, the third by 31 August and the balance outstanding by 31 October in each year.
10. Should parents have financial difficulties in meeting their obligation to the College they are invited to complete a Fee Remission Application Form. This will be reviewed by the Finance Manager and Principal and a recommendation will be made to the College Finance Committee who will then make a final decision regarding eligibility and amount offered.
11. All matters relating to discounts or concessions for families will remain confidential, and at the discretion of the Principal.
12. Where parents have the capacity to pay fees the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued. The College procedures for recovery of fees are:
 - Should the parent/guardian ignore the request for payment of College fees and charges a reminder will be sent 7 days after due date.
 - Should the parent/guardian fail to respond to all reasonable efforts to resolve the outstanding fees another letter will be sent advising that the matter will be handed to a debt collection agency or solicitor for recovery action and any additional costs will be added to the account in accordance with the policy.
 - Should the parent/guardian fail to respond to this letter then the matter will be handed to the debt collection agency or solicitor for recovery of outstanding fees and additional costs.
 - The debt collection agency will send a letter to the debtor requesting payment and/or contact with the College to resolve the dispute.
 - Should the parent/guardian ignore the request then a summons will be issued via the debt collection agency and judgment entered against the parent.

- The debt collection agency is to contact the College Principal or their designate for written approval before enforcement proceedings are taken, such as Property Seizure and Sale Order, Earnings Appropriation Order, or any other enforcement action. The College will then seek written approval from the Director of Catholic Education prior to enforcement proceedings being undertaken.
- All fees and charges incurred by the debt collection agency are to be passed onto the parent/guardian and collected as part of the action.

REFERENCE

Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia: Policy Statement 2-C12 Revised 2012.