

Fee Collection Policy

RATIONALE

Effective financial management provides the school with enhanced educational opportunity.

AIM

To provide a financially well managed school that grasps financial opportunities and makes decisions that are based on the best educational interests of the students.

It is the policy of St Mary's Primary School to charge fees and levies to parents/guardians on an annual basis at the beginning of each school year.

FEES AND LEVIES

- Fees and levies for the following year will be set by the Parish Finance Team in consultation with the Parish Priest and Principal in October of each year, and will not be altered during the year in which they apply except for extraordinary circumstances.
- As far as is practical, fee and levy structures will include all costs necessary to cover student tuition requirements for the year, this also includes student camps.
- Some levies may be invoiced separately during the year with the approval of the Principal. These may include certain non-compulsory excursions.
- The Principal reserves the right to refuse the participation of a student in an extra-curricular activity where outstanding fees / levies exist for a prior school year.
- Each signatory to the enrolment application form and/or subsequent re-enrolment forms will be both jointly and severally responsible for the timely payment of all fees and levies charged during the enrolment of their child at the school. The person/s responsible for the payment of fees and levies must sign the enrolment forms.
- Where the liability for the payment of fees and levies changes from one party to another party, either during the course of a student's enrolment or after a student leaves the school, each party will be required to submit a signed document which clearly indicates the change in liability for the payment of fees and levies, and the commencement date of this change in liability, to the Principal.
- If the School does not receive a mutually accepted agreement from the parties involved, the original signatories to the enrolment will be jointly and severally liable for all debts incurred.
- Where there are no current students at the School and fees and levies remain outstanding, the parties responsible for the payment of these amounts are required to enter into a direct debit agreement or a standing credit card authority with the School. Payments are to be made at least monthly, over a period of time as agreed with the Principal. St Mary's Primary School reserves the right to pursue the payment of the outstanding debt through alternative means if the debtors do not accept these arrangements.

COLLECTION GUIDELINES

The income for the School is derived mainly from three sources:

- (i) Federal Government Funding,

- (ii) State Government Funding,
- (iii) Family Fee Collection.

As it is not fully funded from the Government, it relies for its existence on the Family Fee Collection and support from the school community.

Parents\Guardians will acknowledge their obligation to honor their fee and levy payments when they sign the Enrolment Form. Normal terms of payment are annually, 3 termly, or in advance. Other payment options can be catered for by prior arrangement.

The School Bursar will monitor the payment of fees and levies and make contact with families when they fail to meet their obligations.

Payments made against accounts in arrears will be applied:

- (i) against the oldest balance until eliminated and
- (ii) the current balance or
- (iii) against the nominated account.

Legal processes may be used to recover money owing if all other collection procedures fail. The School reserves the right to recover legal costs incurred in the course of recovering outstanding debts.

Standard Collection

The fee collection process is as follows:

- Prior to the end of the school year, parents are notified of the relevant fees & levies for the following year.
- Payment of the classroom levy is required to be paid by the 3rd week of Term 1.
- At the start of each school year, the school forwards to families an invoice/statement for the given year.
- One third of fees is required for payment by week three weeks of Term 1. Parents will be forwarded a copy of their statement at the start of Term 1 / 2 / 3 as a reminder of any outstanding monies. Copy invoices will be sent at the beginning of Term 2 where a payment of one third of the fees will be required within a three-week period.
- Payment of camp levy must be finalized no later than two weeks prior to the student participating in the camp. The camp levy will be published on the first account sent home at the start of the year.
- An accompanying letter indicating that alternative arrangements can be made with the School Bursar will be provided with the first invoice which includes a section where families are asked to indicate their preferred method of payment. Families may also nominate to pay their fees by direct debit into the school's account.
- A message reminding families to contact the School if there are difficulties meeting fee and levy payments will be sent when families appear to be having difficulties meeting their payments.
- If payments are not received within the remainder of the term they fall due, letters are sent to the families requesting payment or inviting them to attend a meeting with the Principal. These reminders are followed up by telephone calls from the School Bursar.
- In the absence of a response, the matter is forwarded to a collection agency.

Special Circumstances

Discounts or remissions of fees may be considered:

1. Only after formal written application has been made

2. Consideration will include the relative financial situation of the family supported by a statutory declaration from the applicants
3. Upon referral to data available regarding past payment practices, discounts received and support the family may have given the school by other means.
4. On the understanding that fee arrangements will be negotiated annually and the relative financial situation of the family updated.

NB. All families have been discounted \$100 for the 2020 excursion levy due to the impacts of COVID-19.

EVALUATION

This policy will be formally evaluated as part of the cyclical review process.