



# St Joseph's School Clare

## School Fee Policy

### Context Statement:

*'We create an educational environment which matters to students and their families and which resonates culturally and deeply for them. In each learning area, across the whole life of the school, and in partnership with families, each of us discovers in the Spirit, the love of God which is revealed in Jesus Christ, proclaimed by the Church, presented in the scriptures, celebrated in the sacraments and lived by all people of good will.'*

[Catholic Education SA Mission, Values and Vision statement])

### Rationale:

At the heart of St Joseph's School, and in keeping with our ethos as a school founded by Saint Mary of the Cross (MacKillop), we aim to provide accessible and inclusive Catholic education and to build dynamic partnerships with families, students, staff and the wider community, so all are included and feel welcome.

It is the policy of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) that no Catholic student will be denied a Catholic education because a family is unable to pay school fees. Access to Catholic education at St Joseph's School is open to all families.

School fees are required to supplement State and Commonwealth funding and assist St Joseph's School Clare to resource a high quality, contemporary education for all of our students. School fees contribute significantly to the total school income and are a critical element of providing quality Catholic education.

This includes:

- providing resources, materials and equipment
- continually improving the buildings, grounds and other facilities
- providing teaching, administrative and grounds staff

St Joseph's School Clare operates under the umbrella of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) guidelines. School fees and charges are set in line with the School's Five-Year Plan which is prepared in consultation with the Finance Team at Catholic Education South Australia (CESA). In setting the school fees and charges, the School is guided by the Annual Financial Guidelines provided by the Catholic Education Office.

## **Aims:**

Through the application of this policy St Joseph's School will:

- Outline to families the expectations, responsibilities and arrangements for the collection of School Fees
- Support families who experience changed and difficult financial circumstances, maintain their child's/children's enrolment at the school

## **Responsibilities:**

### **The School Board will:**

Oversee the setting and collection of fees on an ongoing basis and ensure that the process is fair, compassionate and transparent.

Aim to set fees at a level to maintain a quality education for our students whilst having consideration for the financial capacity of the community that we serve.

Through the Finance Committee, exercise oversight of the fee process, including the collection of fees and the review of any outstanding fees.

Establish clear guidelines for the collection of school fees, including the granting of remissions. Individual cases of financial hardship, at the discretion of the Principal, are discussed at the Finance Committee. The persons' identity remains confidential. The Parish Priest is consulted on matters pertaining to collection of long outstanding fees.

### **The Principal will:**

Implement the School Fee Policy and Processes

Where possible, adhere to the SACCS guidelines for the collection of fees

Ensure that School Fee statements and reminders for outstanding fees are sent out at the designated times.

Follow through with families, requests for assistance with the payment of School Fees due to financial hardship.

Ensure that details of families' financial circumstances remain confidential to those authorised to access this information. This includes the School Finance Officer and the School Board Finance Committee. Discretion is granted to the Principal regarding adjustments to the SACCS fee collection process for individual cases. This may include remission of fees, outstanding fees or payment for student extra-curricular activities.

Advise and guide the School Board and school personnel on the values that underpin interactions with families and policy decisions

## **The Parents / Caregivers will**

Be responsible for the payment of their school fees /charges in accordance with Joseph's School Clare School Fees Policy and procedures.

Be open and honest in interaction with the Principal regarding the payment of fees and engage with the school should issues occur.

Be respectful of the circumstances of other families in the school community and the discretion of the Principal regarding difficult circumstances that may arise with the collection of outstanding fees.

## **FEE STRUCTURE**

Your fees are inclusive of the following items:

**TUITION FEES:** Tuition Fees are payable to support the operational costs of the school not met by the Australian and State Government Funding received by the school.

**RESOURCE FEE:** Resource fees assist with the provision of student resources such as *Art/Craft materials, Sports equipment, Religious Education resources, Library resources, Photocopying.*

**BUILDING FUND:** The purpose of this fund is to provide financing for new building projects. The Building Fund is applicable to families who do not contribute to the Planned Giving Program with the Catholic Church.

**MAINTENANCE LEVY:** The Maintenance Levy is applicable to families who do not contribute to the Planned Giving Program with the Catholic Church.

**TEXT BOOK FEE:** This item covers the costs of workbooks used in Spelling/English and Maths.

**TECHNOLOGY LEVY:** This levy enables the school to provide a comprehensive ICT program for our students and includes internet transmission, ongoing maintenance and upgrading of ICT facilities and software.

**INSURANCE LEVY:** The school has 24-hour Insurance cover which works out more economically than insurance for each individual excursion or camp.

**EDUCATION CAPITAL LEVY:** This levy supports investment by Catholic Education SA in education infrastructure.

**MUSIC LEVY:** This amount assists with the costs of music instruction.

The following items will be billed in the term in which they occur.

**SWIMMING LEVY:** This amount covers pool entrance and swimming instruction, and is billed in Term 4.

**PERFORMANCES:** As part of our Arts program we offer a variety of guest artists and performances to students throughout the year. Costs are invoiced across the four terms of the year.

**CAMPS & EXCURSIONS:** Excursion costs vary per year dependent on the camp activity and are billed to your school account in the relevant term.

## **Schedule of Fees**

The Finance Committee will oversee all matters relating to the setting of fees, remissions and collections. Once the Finance Committee sets the school fees, they then go to the School Board for approval.

Parents/Caregivers will be provided with the schedule of fees on application for enrolment. Prospective parents/caregivers will also be informed that on enrolment of their child, they accept responsibility for the payment of tuition fees and other associated costs, as outlined in the Fee Structure, with the education of their children. Parents/Caregivers make a commitment to pay school fees when they sign the Application for Enrolment Form for St Joseph's School, Clare/

## **Family Discounts**

School Fee reductions are given to families with two or more children attending the school.

## **School Card**

The Government of South Australia offers assistance for families via the School Card Scheme. Families on low income are encouraged to apply for Government assistance under the School Card Scheme. It is important that Parents/Caregivers work with the school to complete the necessary documentation, as there are administrative cut-off dates (determined by the Department for Education) that apply each year and need to be complied with.

Families approved for School Card will receive a 40% reduction in the Tuition Fee component of School Fees / Charges.

## **Financial Hardship**

Where families are suffering financial hardship, they are encouraged to meet with the Principal to discuss their situation and determine if a reduction in Tuition Fees is warranted. All such applications remain in the strictest confidence. **Non-payment of reduced tuition fees is treated as an overdue account.**

Any reduction in tuition fees will be considered in terms of the financial needs of the family and the School Board's responsibility to families who are making an effort to pay regular fees.

Families are granted a reduction of tuition fees for the current year only, after which time they will need to reapply in future years if their financial circumstances have not changed.

Likewise, it will be seen as the family's responsibility to contact the Finance Manager if their financial position improves.

## **Payment of Fees**

St Joseph's School, Clare, supports the concept of equitable financial responsibility of all members of its community, and part payment of fees by the due date or by way of regular payments is part of the process.

To achieve this goal, the school encourages regular communication between all parties in relation to the payment of fees.

Accounts can be paid either by Cash, Cheque, EFTPOS, Direct Debit, BPAY or via QKR! app. All details are included on the fee statements. Families are strongly encouraged to enter into a direct debit or regular payment plan arrangement with the school to maintain a constant level of payment and reduce the need for the school to follow up unpaid school fee accounts.

## **The Procedures for the collection of School Fees:**

School Fees / Charges are invoiced per term of the school year.

Fee Statements will be sent out:

- Week 1 of each term (with relevant term's fees / charges)
  - Week 5 of each term (follow-up reminder) – ***all fees/charges payable by the Friday of Week 5 of the relevant term***
  - End of each term (follow-up outstanding fee reminders)
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- For payment arrangements made via direct debit, families will have a time-frame for payment of February to last day of Term 4 each year.
  - If a payment arrangement is not entered into then each term's fees are due and payable by the Friday of Week 5 of the relevant term. Where payments are not received by the end of each term, an account rendered statement will be sent home with an overdue reminder. Families are reminded about the payments and personal contact should be made to the school if there are any difficulties.
  - The School Board Finance Committee is informed of any large outstanding fee payments and the Principal will personally contact families regarding payment. Contact will be either by telephone or letter, or both, and may include an invitation to attend an interview. Failure to respond within 7 days will result in further action being taken. Such action may include referral to a debt collection agency.

In the circumstance that a family applies for, but does not meet the threshold for a school fee reduction, the school should work out a payment plan with the family.

**Review Date: Feb 2023**