

	<b>Topic:</b> School Fees – Setting and Collection Policy
	<b>CECWA Policy:</b> 2-C12
	<b>Policy Area:</b> Enrichment
	<b>Date Released:</b> 2010
	<b>Date For Review:</b> 2015

## 1. Rationale

The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) has a responsibility to make a Catholic Education available to all Catholic students whose parents seek a Catholic education for them, insofar as possible, while embodying a special preference for the poor and disadvantaged. (Mandate, P 50) The College has a responsibility to communicate to parents enrolling their children the financial constraints under which it operates. Parents are asked 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.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1 School Fees

For the purpose of this policy School Fees shall be considered to be tuition fees, building levies amenities fees, subject fees, camps, book hire, etc

### 2.2 Application for Enrolment Fee

The fee associated with processing an application for student enrolment into Holy Cross College

### 2.3 Acceptance of Enrolment Fee

The fee associated with securing a student enrolment into Holy Cross College after an enrolment of enrolment has been made by Holy Cross College

### 2.4 Role of College Board

The College Board has a managerial role with regard to the setting and collection of fees.

### 2.5 Role of the College Board

In diocesan accountable schools, Boards have a managerial role with regard to setting and collection of school fees.

### **3. Principles**

- 3.1 The collection of school fees will be approached in a spirit of Christian charity and justice.
- 3.2 Financial grounds shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from Holy Cross College.
- 3.3 The CECWA is responsible for ensuring the financial viability of group funded schools.
- 3.4 The Holy Cross College Board has the responsibility for the financial management of Holy Cross College and, consequently, is responsible for the collection of school fees.
- 3.5 The inability to pay school fees will never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from Holy Cross College.
- 3.6 The College Board will ensure that school fees reflect the socio-economic status of the College community.
- 3.7 Families with limited financial resources and means tested family concession card holders have an entitlement to claim some form of fee concession. Requests for fee concessions will be treated with dignity, compassion and confidentiality.
- 3.8 The withholding of student access to normal pastoral and curriculum provision will not be used as a fee collection strategy.
- 3.9 Every effort shall be made to protect the confidentiality of all information pertaining to parents and the payment of school fees.
- 3.10 Where parents/and or guardians have the capacity to pay fees, the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued.

### **4. Procedures**

- 4.1 Annual fees and charges, including maximum increases, will be set by the College Board in accordance with CECWA advice, provided during the budget process each year.
- 4.2 If the College wishes to exceed the maximum increase in school fees and charges the College Board must obtain the permission of the Director of Catholic Education.

- 4.3 On application for enrolment, parents will be provided with the College's fee policy and current schedule of fees. Any clarification needed by parents about this policy can be sought during the enrolment interview.
- 4.4 The following levels of sibling discount are applicable to the Tuition Fee component for students enrolled at Holy Cross College:
- 1<sup>st</sup> child = 0%
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> child = 20%
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> child = 40%
  - 4<sup>th</sup> child and beyond = 100%
- All families are eligible for sibling discounts including families who receive automatic tuition fee discounts as holders of eligible means tested family concession cards. Sibling discounts do not apply to the 3-year-old programme.
- 4.5 Kindergarten tuition fees are charged at 40% of the Junior School Fee. Sibling discounts apply.
- 4.6 The CECWA decision regarding automatic tuition fee discounts for holders of eligible means tested family concession cards shall be implemented. The fee level shall be communicated to the College by the Catholic Education Office during the budget process each year. Eligibility will be discussed during the enrolment process and will be communicated to eligible families enrolled at the College.
- 4.7 Where an offer of a place is made, parents/guardians will be required to pay a deposit (Acceptance of Enrolment Fee) to secure this place. This deposit will be taken off the school fees in the year that the student commences at the College. It is a non-refundable deposit.
- 4.8 At the time of enrolment parents will sign a fee agreement with the College.
- 4.9 Parents are required to give ten weeks written notice in term time if their child will not be attending or returning to the College. Failure to give such notice will result in a charge of one term's fees in lieu of notice. No refunds will be provided where a student leaves at or after the end of term 3, with no notice. Subject selection forms completed and signed by students and parents for the following year will deem that the student will be returning the following year. A student who leaves part way through a year and has given sufficient notice will be given a discount on the Tuition Fee component only. Where a student enters the College during the year, fees will be charged on a pro-rata basis.

- 4.10 Some parents may be eligible for the Secondary Assistance Scheme. Forms and further information may be obtained from the College Office at the commencement of each school year.
- 4.11 Parents who have difficulty paying fees should contact the College Finance and Property Officer or College Principal to negotiate a payment schedule and provision of concessions, if required.
- 4.12 Where parents have the capacity to pay fees, the collection of school fees shall be actively pursued. Where parents have ignored all reasonable attempts to negotiate a fee payment strategy and further action is required:
- documentation shall be kept on each attempt to resolve the problems of outstanding fees
  - parents shall be notified that the services of a debt collection agency or solicitor will be engaged to recover outstanding fees and any additional costs shall be added to the account
  - Holy Cross College will only engage the services of a debt collection agency or solicitor who undertakes to comply with ACCC, Trade Practices Act (TPA) and ASIC Debt Guidelines for collectors and creditors
  - a General Procedures Claim summons can be issued by the appropriate school via a debt collection agency authority and judgement entered against the parent. Before enforcement proceedings are taken, such as Property Seizure and Sale Order, Earnings Appropriation Order, or any other enforcement action, written approval must be obtained from the Director of Catholic Education.

## **5. References**

'Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009 – 2015'

## **6. Related Documents**

ACC, Trade Practices Act (TPA)

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)

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