



Star of the Sea Primary School Fee Policy

Originally written: 2012
Reviewed: 2020

RATIONALE:

Star of the Sea school supports The Catholic Education of Western Australia Ltd (CEWA) in its 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 special preference for the poor and disadvantaged. Star of the Sea school has a responsibility to communicate the financial constraints under which they operate, to parents enrolling their children in the school. Parents are asked to make a commitment to support the school's education programme 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.

DEFINITION:

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

PRINCIPLES:

1. All schools shall have a direct relationship between school fees and the socio-economic status of the school community.
2. The School Board has the responsibility for the financial management of the school and, consequently, is responsible for the collection of school fees.
3. The School Board shall actively pursue the collection of school fees where parents have the capacity to pay fees.
4. The practice of charity requires that requests for fee concessions be treated with dignity, compassion and confidentiality. For example, recipients of social welfare benefits have an entitlement to claim some form of fee concession.
5. The inability to pay school fees shall never be the reason for the non-enrolment or exclusion of any child from Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School.
6. The withholding of services to students will not be used as a fee collection strategy.
7. Every effort shall be made to protect the confidentiality of all information pertaining to parents and the payment of school fees.
8. 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 shall be treated with dignity, compassion and confidentiality.

PROCEDURES:

1. Setting of Annual Fees

The School Annual fees and charges including maximum increases shall be set by the School Board using guidelines in accordance with advice provided by the CEWA Ltd. The School Board will set annual fees and charges including maximum increases during the budget process each year.

2. Application Fee

On application for enrolment parents will be provided with the school's fee policy. This includes details of any additional charges and information relating to the school's fee concession policy. (Any clarification needed by the parents about the school's fee policy can be given at the initial enrolment interview).

3. Discounts

The School Board shall determine the level of sibling discounts. The following discount levels apply to tuition fees only:

1st child	0%
2nd child	20%
3rd child	40%
4th child & beyond	100%

A family with a means tested concession card is entitled to a discount on tuition, amenities and building levy.

4. Kindergarten Fees

Four Year Old Kindergarten fees shall be charged at a percentage of a first child fee rate. This percentage is 60% tuition of a full time 1st child. The normal discounts apply to second, third and fourth child fees.

5. The Composition of the School fees.

Annual fees charged can be found on the schedule that is announced at the Annual School Community meeting in November. Fees comprise the following:

a) Tuition Fees:

Tuition fees are allocated to the various Learning Areas to support the teaching and learning programs provided by the school. If starting mid-term a calculation of the fee will be made based on the number of weeks attendance.

b) Building Levy:

The Building Levy is charged on a per family basis. Payments to the school building fund are used for the purpose of debt servicing loans and providing for the future capital development of the school. All schools in the Catholic Education system must pay into a central co-responsibility fund to assist in the on-going development of all schools.

c) P & F Levy:

This levy is collected by the P & F via the school fee account to limit fundraising during the course of the year. In co-operation with the Principal and School Board the P & F develops a set of priorities for the year and these are funded according to need.

d) Amenities Fee:

The Amenities Fee is charged per child. The money is used to purchase a wide range of textbooks, stationery, art and craft materials and other sundry items consumed by the children during the course of the year.

- **Insurance Levy:** Provides 24 hours a day, 365 days a year world-wide cover for accidents. This provides for a total cover up to \$500,000 for items not already covered by Medicare. Please note this fee is an annual charge and does not pro-rata for families starting part way through the year.
- **Computer Levy:** A Computer levy will be charged and added to the School Fee account. Four-year-old Kindergarten children will be charged 3/5 of the levy on the basis that they attend three days per week. Students in Year 4 to 6 will have a small additional charge for leasing their iPad. They will also have the option to purchase outright at the end of the lease.
- **Swimming:** Swimming will be charged to the school fee account for PP – Y6 students.
- **Incursions / Excursions:** A standard amount for excursions and incursions are charged to the school fee account.
- **Speech / Occupational Screening:** This is charged to the school fee account for all Kindergarten students.

e) Education Packs:

The Education Pack includes all the necessary aspects which enable students to deliver a full comprehensive curriculum (also includes Athletics and Spelling Mastery). This will be charged to the school fee account.

f) Camp Fees:

Year 6 camp fees will be approximated and charged at the beginning of the year.

g) Application for Enrolment Fee:

A \$35 (GST inc) Application Fee is charged to ensure places sought are genuine. All applications attract the Application Fee.

h) Acceptance of Enrolment Fee:

A \$50 fee is charged to secure places which will then be deducted from the tuition fees for the year.

6. Terms of Payment:

School Fees are payable within 21 days from receipt of statement. A 5% discount is offered on the tuition fees component only (not Building Fund or Amenities Fee) to families who pay the full annual amount by the date set at the AGM the previous November. If this option is not exercised, then the school fees are payable over the three invoices cycle that cover the full school fees for that year. If these arrangements are not able to be met, other options for payment can be negotiated by the family with the Principal.

School Fees must be paid in full by 31 October of each year. An annual fee account will be sent to all families in February with three options of payment. These are:

- One payment made in full within 21 days of the account being issued. If this option is taken there is a 5% discount on the Tuition component of the total account.
- A payment arrangement agreed to that can be paid weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly and finalises the school fee account by the 31 October.
- School fee annual account paid in four equal instalments at the beginning of each term.

Reminder statements will be sent at the beginning of Term 2, 3 and 4.

If these arrangements are not able to be met, other options for payment can be negotiated with the Principal.

Payments Options:

Fees may either be paid in cash, cheque, EFTPOS (Master, Visa), Direct Debit or B-Pay. Credit card payments can be made over the telephone. Forms for direct debit can be obtained from the office or the school website. There are no additional charges from the school for the use of Credit cards.

7. Collection of Outstanding Fees:

In accordance with the CEWA School Fees: Setting and Collection, further strategies and procedures are available to the school to facilitate the collection of outstanding school fees. Where parents have ignored all reasonable attempts to negotiate a fee repayment strategy and further action is required:

- a) Written communication shall be sent to parents, bringing promptly to their attention the outstanding balance.
- b) If there is no response within 7 days a second collection letter will be sent, in a sensitive discreet and confidential matter.
- c) If the second collection letter has not been responded to or no action results from it within the 14 days, a third and final letter from the school Principal will be used to remind parents of their financial obligations. If payments are not received within the specified timeframe, payment will be sought by way of legal action.
- d) If, despite this last letter, there is no response or action the Principal will engage the services of a debt collection agency to recover any outstanding fees.
- e) Schools shall keep comprehensive documentation of each attempt to resolve the problems of outstanding fees.
- f) Under no circumstances can a child enrolled in a school be refused on-going enrolment because their parents have not paid fees.

- g) In the event of a family separation the balance of fees and incidentals incurred, remain the responsibility of both parties unless a court approved order is received by the school stating otherwise.

8. Notice of Withdrawal:

If you intend leaving Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School, you need to contact the Principal and give as much notice as possible. Parents are required to give 10 weeks' notice in writing if they wish to withdraw their child from the school during the course of the school year. If a student is withdrawn without notice during a term, the full fees for that term plus 10 weeks' fees will be charged.

9. Mid-term enrolment:

A family enrolling a child mid-term will be charged for the number of weeks remaining in that term.

10. Enrolment:

No family will ever be refused a place in the school because of financial difficulties. Families experiencing hardship are invited to approach the Principal to discuss their circumstances and to arrange mutually satisfactory terms for payment. Requests for special terms must be negotiated each year.