

## **A FEE CHARGING POLICY**

1. Caroline Chisholm Catholic College charges tuition fees, levies and capital fees to cover the gap between government grants and the expenditure necessary to provide a suitable curriculum. In conjunction with a just and equitable concession policy ensuring that no student is denied enrolment for financial reasons, all families who are able to pay fees are expected to pay the amount as advised, by the due date, as a matter of justice to other parents and students.
  - 1.1 Fees are set having regard to the following:
    - ❑ The School Mission Statement;
    - ❑ The cost of providing the curriculum and support services;
    - ❑ The level of government grants; and
    - ❑ The capacity of parents to pay.
  - 1.2 Fees and levies are set by the Board of Management upon recommendation by the School Finance Committee.
  - 1.3 As far as is practical, fee structures will include all costs and charges necessary to cover student subjects for the year.
  - 1.4 The Board is not in favour of the College asking parents to pay for additional compulsory subject costs, excursions, etc., which were not included in the original fees structure.
  - 1.5 Some charges may be invoiced separately during the year with the approval of the Principal. These may include certain non-compulsory excursions. However, students who go to this non-compulsory trips should have paid fees at due date.
  - 1.6 Where a student elects to take private music lessons through the College, the annual music tuition fees and/or instrument hire will be invoiced to the family. Parents are required to pay for music fees together with the school fees.

## 2. **Overseas Students - Special Arrangements**

- 2.1 Under the Commonwealth Government Guidelines, these students are not eligible for any Government funding.
- Therefore, all Full Fee Paying Overseas Students will be required to pay **ALL** fees, levies, and charges.
- They will also be required to pay the full amount of all Government Grants which would normally be attributed to the CATHOLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM as follows:
- (a) Commonwealth Grant
  - (b) State Grant
  - (c) State Education Allowances
- 2.2 These full fees are compulsory to ensure that parents (and all taxpayers) are not subsidising these students.
- 2.3 Full Fee Paying Overseas Students are required to pay all fees and extra costs for each semester prior to the commencement of each semester. No discount will apply to such payments. (The renewal of their Visa is also dependent upon such payments being made.)

## 3. **Refund of Fees to Exiting Students**

The College bases its teacher staffing and other related educational expenses on student population as at the 1st February each year.

Where a student exits the College mid-term, it is unlikely that another student would be waiting to fill their place; therefore we are committed to the above expenditure and could not reasonably consider refunds in these cases.

- 3.1 Students who exit the College during the year will be entitled only to a refund of their **tuition fees** for the subsequent term (if fees are paid in advance).
- 3.2 Composite levies and capital fees are committed at the beginning of the year; therefore no refund for these charges will be made.
- 3.3 Parents may appeal to the Principal in writing should they believe that their circumstances are exceptional.

## 4. **Full Fee Paying Overseas Students**

- 4.1 Where a Full Fee Paying Overseas Student withdraws from the course during the year, the College will refund fees relating to all school (quarterly) terms which are subsequent to the term in which the student withdraws and for which fees have been pre-paid.
- 4.2 In accordance with legal requirements, the College will maintain special indemnity insurance cover with the Catholic Church Insurances Limited to safeguard fees paid by full fee paying students against the possibility of closure or financial collapse of the College. A copy of this policy may be viewed at either the Administration office or Catholic Church Insurances Limited.

## 5. **Application for Enrolment Fee**

- 5.1 An Enrolment Fee is payable to the college at the time of enrolment of a prospective student. The amount of the Enrolment Fee is set by the Finance Committee and is intended to cover the costs involved in registering the student into the school database system and all subsequent administrative actions involved in the enrolment process.
- 5.2 Enrolment fees are as per College Fees and Charges schedule.
- 5.3 In the event that the college is subsequently unable to offer a position to the enrolled student, a proportion of the Enrolment Fee will be reimbursed to the parent(s).

## 6. **Acceptance Fee**

- 6.1 An Acceptance Fee is charged to all prospective year 7 students who have enrolled during the year preceding their commencement at Caroline Chisholm Catholic College.  

The Acceptance Fee is charged at the time that a place is confirmed and offered to the family. Payment of the Acceptance Fee indicates a clear commitment of intention by the parent(s) to take up the place that has been offered.
- 6.2 The amount of the Acceptance fee has been set \$500.
- 6.3 Provided that the student commences in Year 7 the following year, the Acceptance Fee amount will be reduced from the normal Year 7 Fees Structure.
- 6.4 In the event that the college subsequently withdraws the offer of a place to a student, the whole Acceptance Fee will be refunded to the child's parent(s).
- 6.5 In the event that the parent(s) subsequently withdraw the child, there will be no refund of the acceptance fee.
- 6.6 The Principal may consider rescinding or reducing amounts withheld in the event of special circumstances.

## 7. **Re-enrolment Process**

- 7.1 To assist the College in planning and budgeting for the subsequent year, a re-enrolment and subject selection process has been put in place. This takes place during the months of August and September.
- 7.2 In place of a re-enrolment fee, the College will bill the total school fees for the following year in advance. School fees for the following year will be billed in September of the current year.
- 7.3 The standard method of collecting fees in 3 installments has been amended to **4 installments**; the first installment to be paid in October of the current year. This will replace the re-enrolment fee.

## **B FEE COLLECTION POLICY**

### **8. Fee Collection Overview**

- 8.1 It is acknowledged that there is a wide divergence in our families' financial circumstances. As a result, a fee collection procedure is structured to assist parents to cope with their own particular circumstances.
- 8.2 The College has a responsibility to the wider school community to make every reasonable endeavor to collect fees from those families who can afford them.
- 8.3 A mechanism is to be maintained to assist families who are genuinely unable to pay their fees.

### **9. Payment methods available to parents**

- 9.1 The standard method of paying school fees is by four (4) installments :
- October of the current year
  - March
  - May
  - July
- 9.2 Parents who are unable to pay by the standard method described in 9.1 may make special arrangements to pay their fees off on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis, provided that under these arrangements, their fees are finalised by the end of the school year. Parents who pay off their fees under the non-standard arrangements are encouraged to use the Direct Debit (9.3.1 below) or the Bank deposit system (9.3.2 below).  
All arrangements are to be made in conjunction with the Business Manager or his/her nominated assistant.
- 9.3 *Alternative methods of payment are:*
- 9.3.1 *Direct Debit* - Where parents authorise the College to debit a nominated amount from their bank account each week / fortnight / month / or term.
- 9.3.2 *BPay* - Where parents register with their bank or financial institution and arrange to have their account debited in payment of school fees. Please contact your bank regarding BPay.
- 9.3.3 *Cash / Cheque /EFTPOS Payments* - Nominated amounts to be paid directly to the Accounts Office of an amount and frequency as per agreement made in 9.2.
- 9.3.4 *Centrelink Deduction* – Where families who receive a government benefit or allowance nominate an amount which Centrelink directly pays to the College to cover school fees. Families who require assistance under Section 13 are requested to cover a portion of their fees in this way.

### **10 Families Facing Hardship**

- 10.1 Parents who are unable to meet their fees by any of the above methods will be eligible to apply for Family Assistance as per section 13 below.

## **FEE COLLECTION PROCESS**

- 11 Parents who dishonour standing fee payment arrangements are to be given every reasonable opportunity to remedy the situation prior to serious action being taken against them. Normal fee collection procedures when a default on fee payment occurs are as follows:
  - 11.1 A phone call will be made to the parent(s) requesting payment. Bank dishonour fees will be included in the fees account.
  - 11.2 A letter will be posted to the family if no payment has been received or new arrangements are not in place. (*Letter No 1 page 8*)
  - 11.3 A letter from the Business Manager will follow after a further two weeks. (*Letter No 2 page 9*)
  - 11.4 Should the parent(s) fail to satisfactorily respond to the letter, the Principal will write a Final Notice letter requesting full payment of all overdue fees. (*Letter No 3 page 10*)

## **LEGAL ACTION**

12. The College will take legal action to recover outstanding fees where every attempt outlined above has been disregarded by the parent(s) and it is the opinion of the Principal and the Business Manager, after due consideration, that the family has the ability to pay the debt.
  - 12.1 As a general rule, we would not take legal action upon a parent of a student still attending the school, although this would not be the case where the person legally responsible for payment of the fees does not reside with the student. Normally we will wait until the children of the family have left the school.
  - 12.2 Prior to proceeding with legal action, the school will contact the Parish Priest of the family to establish whether he is aware of any circumstances, which would cause us to suspend such action.
  - 12.3 The College will utilise the services of a reputable Collection Agency which will treat these debtors with due dignity and whose procedures allow further opportunity to make arrangements to pay the debt prior to taking legal action.
  - 12.4 Once the School Fees Account is transferred to the Collection Agency, the debtor's account will be paid to the Collection Agency and written off the College Accounts. The family's account cannot be reinstated in the College books unless consultation with the Business Manager occurs. Debt collection charges will be included in the family's account.

## **C FAMILY ASSISTANCE**

13. The College Board will initiate a process to assist families unable to meet their fees commitment as a result of genuine hardship. Proposed procedures are as follows:
  - 13.1 Families may apply for Family Assistance via their Parish Priest, any Board member, the Principal or the Business Manager. All applications and subsequent actions are to be handled with the utmost discretion and confidentiality.

- 13.2 Under normal circumstances, these families will be required to attend one of several Financial Counselors appointed by the College. The benefits of this are twofold:
- 13.2.1 A qualified Counselor will help these families set up a family budget, which may assist them in resolving their financial difficulties.
  - 13.2.2 The Counselor will establish the level of fees that the family might reasonably commit to pay the College and make recommendations as to the level of assistance that the family will require.
- 13.3 Under normal circumstances, the family will automatically be accepted under Family Assistance for that portion of their fees as recommended by the Counselor. The family will be expected to honour the balance of their fees (if any), as agreed with the Counselor.
- 13.4 A Counselor should review all families at least once a year; however the Business Manager may elect to defer this review where it is obvious that the family's circumstances remain unchanged.
- 13.5 Family Assistance is made available to assist with the payment of School Fees and the Capital Levy, however due to limited resources as well as for practical reasons; it cannot assist with the payment of Composite Levies. Nor is it available for assistance with the payment of Books, Stationery or Uniforms.
- 13.6 In the event that the Administration believes that a family has inappropriately applied for Family Assistance, the matter will be referred to the family's Parish Priest and then, if necessary, the case will be directed to the Board Executive for final decision.
- 13.7 The Business Manager will write to the family on behalf of the Board advising them of the basis of their acceptance (or otherwise) for Family Assistance.
- 13.8 The Business Manager will provide a general report to the Board from time to time advising statistics relating to the level of Family Assistance being provided to our families at the time.

### 13.9 ***The Role of the Regional Parish Priests***

- 13.9.1 Parish Priests are encouraged to refer families whom they believe would qualify for fee assistance. Where the Parish Priest perceives that there may be exceptional circumstances that might require a variation to the normal procedures, the Parish Priest will refer the matter to the Principal who will personally interview the family. The Principal will make the ultimate decision as to the basis upon which the family will be accepted and will convey this to the family in writing with copy to the Parish Priest.

## **D FAMILY DISCOUNT**

14. Family Discounts apply to tuition fees only, and are available for those families with more than one student attending Caroline Chisholm Catholic College or Marian College, as follows
  - 2 students - 10% of tuition fees
  - 3 students - 20% of tuition fees
  - 4 students - 40% of tuition fees.

## **E STAFF DISCOUNT**

15. As a way of encouraging loyalty to the College and in the spirit of community building, a 25% staff discount on **tuition fees only** will be afforded to each student who is a child of a College staff member. Staff discounts supersede family discounts, therefore staff members who have more than 1 child in the school will only be entitled to the 25% discount for tuition fees of each child.