

## SCHOOL FEE POLICY

School fees and levies play a pivotal role in meeting the school's ongoing financial commitments and fulfilment of its educational endeavours.

Sacred Heart is committed to effective organisation and administration within our school.

Our school fee policy is based upon the principles of equity, justice, and pastoral care for the members of our community. All families within the school community are expected to contribute to the financial commitments of the school.

School fees and levies charged to parents are set and reviewed annually by the School Board to ensure that they are equitable for all families and are commensurate with the facilities and services which the school provides.

Fees and Levies collected at Sacred Heart School are used for the following purposes which are aligned to the Vision and Mission of the Sacred Heart School to:

- Provide teaching, administrative, classroom support and facilities
- Provide essential resources, materials, facilities and equipment
- Assist with providing activities such as excursions
- Support the Sacred Heart School building program
- Maintain buildings, grounds and other facilities

The Sacred Heart School Parents and Friends Association also collects a levy through the school fee structure.

For those families experiencing short or long-term genuine inability to pay fees, we are committed to providing support to ensure that enrolment is not compromised. Please contact the Principal and/or Finance Secretary for further information concerning the concession application process.

### **School Fee and Levy Collection Process**

1. School fees and levies are charged on a **term** basis during the second week of the term in accordance with the School Fees and Levies Schedule (available on our website).
2. Fees are due to be paid within 14 days of the issue of the Statement of Fees and Levies. The due date will be noted on the statement.
3. Where a parent/guardian believes financial circumstances have arisen that will prevent or delay the payment of the school fee account, a variety of options are available:
  - a. Extension of Time  
If an extension is required, please contact the school finance office prior to the due

date.

b. Payment Plans

Payment of the school fee and levy account by regular instalments. All payment plans must ensure that the account is cleared by the last day of the school year or as negotiated with the Principal and / or Finance Secretary.

c. Fee Concessions

In cases of financial hardship an application may be made for a fee concession.

- (i) Concession applications are accepted at the commencement of each year or at any point initiated by the family. Concessions are issued for a maximum period of 12 months within a calendar year. Consideration for a subsequent 12-month period will require a new application.
- (ii) A compassionate and just approach under the mission and values of Brisbane Catholic Education and Sacred Heart School is used when reviewing applications. The same process is adopted by all Brisbane Catholic Education schools/colleges for assessing eligibility.
- (iii) Concession application forms are available at the school finance office.
- (iv) All matters are dealt with on a confidential basis.

4. Recovery of unpaid fees

In fairness to families who pay their school fees regularly and on time, Sacred Heart School will follow up all overdue school fee accounts.

- a. A reminder statement/notice/letter will be issued within 7 days to any family who has not settled their school fee account by the due date where a payment plan or other arrangements are not in place.
- b. If payment or a suitable response is not received within 7 days of the reminder statement, contact with the parent will be made via telephone, mail or email.
- c. If after two weeks from this second reminder satisfactory arrangements have not been reached, the account may be sent to the college Debt Collection agency. In serious cases, where there is clear capacity to pay outstanding fees, legal options may be pursued by the school.
- d. Legal costs, direct debit rejection fees and any debt collection costs or other costs incurred will be at the family's expense.

### **Agreed Payment Plans**

As mentioned in point 3b above, our school offers families the opportunity of paying the school fee account by regular instalments over the course of the year. All Agreed Payment Plans must be organised to include a regular schedule that will clear the school fees account by the last day of the school year. Any extensions to an Agreed Payment Plan must be negotiated with the Principal

and/or Finance Secretary. To establish an Agreed Payment Plan, Direct Debit forms are available on the school website, Parent Portal or from the school finance office.

### **Late Start Enrolment**

New students entering Sacred Heart School after the commencement of the term may be charged on a pro-rata basis for the remaining weeks of the term where appropriate at the Principal's and/or Finance Secretary's discretion.

### **Withdrawal of Enrolment**

Fees will be payable for the whole term in which the enrolment is terminated. For a reduction in fees a written request must be made to the Principal at the time of notification and may be granted at the Principal's discretion.

Student text books, library books and laptops and all accessories are to be returned to the School. If any fees remain outstanding, they will be payable as per the normal payment terms and where appropriate, any fees in credit will be refunded.

### **Extended Leave/ Holding an enrolment place**

Fees will be payable for the whole term in which extended leave is taken. For a reduction in fees a written request must be made to the Principal at the time of notification and may be granted at the Principal's discretion. Consideration will be given to the length of the break, the nature of the leave, the time the student has been at the college, the number of previous leave occurrences, and the existence of student waiting lists.

**For further clarification regarding the above school fee and levy collection process, please contact the Sacred Heart School finance office.**