Pre-School Fee Policy
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Introduction

Catholic Schools, in partnership with parents, in union with Christ’s saving mission and school communities, educate young people for participation in the church and world communities today.

The Policy for School Fees is framed within the Vision statement for South Australian Catholic Schools. This policy recognises that Catholic School communities develop the whole person, encourage the pursuit of excellence and celebrate the human and divine gifts of each student.

_S.A. Commission for Catholic Schools Vision Statement 1991_

Definition

Pre-school fees is the money collected from parents and directed towards the recurrent operating and maintenance costs of the Pre-school and capital cost in relation to Capital Building Loans. The School Board is conscious of the sacrifices parents make to send children to Catholic Pre-schools and appreciates the difficulties being experienced by both fee-paying parents and Pre-schools trying to cope with increasing costs.

Principles

The following principles underpin St. Joseph’s Pre-school Fee Policy;

- The education of children is a joint responsibility.
- The School Board recognises that the Pre-School community is made up of people with varying income levels.
- Equity and justice are the foundations and the framework of the Pre-School Fee Policy.
- Every person is treated with respect and dignity.
- Parents are the first educators of their children and are partners in all facets of Pre-School life.
- Catholic Tradition and values emphasise the need for each person to have a sense of belonging to a community.

Policy

- No child is to be denied a Catholic education as a result of a parent's inability to pay Pre-School fees.
- Pre-School fees are the only source of income available to meet the Pre-School's operating costs.
- All families need to contribute to the financial viability of the Pre-School.
• Families who go on extended holidays during the school year will still be expected to pay fees for the period they are away, without any remissions. If a family is experiencing difficulties, fees can be negotiated with the Principal and/or Bursar.
• Pre-School Fees will be increased where appropriate to cover increase in costs.
• Parents seeking enrolment for their children will be presented with the Pre-School’s expectations regarding the payment of fees.

Key Policy Outcomes

• The Principal will sensitively assess the ability to pay, so that no family suffers undue hardship.
• The Principal and Bursar, (mindful that financial hardship can occur through unforeseen circumstances), will encourage early negotiation to avoid misunderstanding and hardship in the collection of fees. If a family experiences unexpected changes in circumstances during the year, which results in financial hardship, an application for a fee concession can be made at any time.
• The Board has an expectation, however, that as a matter of simple justice to families who honour their commitment to the payment of Pre-School fees, that those can pay, do so. It reserves the right to take any appropriate actions necessary to recover outstanding or overdue tuition fees.
• The collection of fees is open to negotiation with families with regard to payments made.
• All fees are to be collected promptly to facilitate a balanced budget.
• Pre-School fees are to be adjusted where appropriate to avoid steep increases.
• The Finance Committee will refer to the Board Meetings where necessary, to discuss and assess Pre-school fee matters.
• Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

The process for the collection of Pre-school Fees will be –

• At the beginning of each term a single family account will be posted home from the Pre-school. It is expected that fees will be paid by the due date.
• Full Pre-school fee statements are posted out four-six weeks after the invoices and this also acts as a reminder.
• Fees are payable by the end of Week 4 of each term.
• Reminder notices are placed in the school’s newsletter.
• Outstanding accounts followed up by Principal and/or Bursar.
• Negotiated payments, fortnightly, monthly, must be maintained regularly and punctually.
• Direct debit from nominated bank accounts/credit cards is encouraged for instalment payments.
• Where the payment of Pre-school fees is not made after reasonable attempt of collection, the recovery of fees plus costs will be placed in the hands of a debt collector and action pursued to its finality.
• As a last result a debt collection agency may also be employed on behalf of the Pre-school to recover bad debts plus costs from families who have left the Pre-school and have the capacity to pay.
• Records will be kept regarding fee collection, fee remission and payment by instalment agreement, as well as documentation regarding overdue Pre-school fee accounts and any action taken by the Finance Committee.

• Students beginning or leaving part way through a term will be charged on a pro rata basis.

Dated: June 2015

Philip Schultz  
Principal

Anne Burke  
School Board Chairperson