



FEE POLICY & STRUCTURE

This document contains important information about your responsibilities in relation to school fees and levies. Please read carefully and if you have any questions contact the Finance Department.

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School Fee Policy

Introduction

St Joseph's is committed to providing an inclusive, quality Catholic education to all students. St Joseph's receives funding from both State and Commonwealth authorities; however, we rely heavily on parent fees to cover expenses and payment of fees is vital for the school to remain economically viable and stable.

Fees and Levies collected at St Joseph's are used for the following purposes which are aligned with the Vision and Mission of the School:

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

The St Joseph's 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. Completion of a Payment Commitment Form is required at the commencement of the school year to advise the payment method & frequency.
2. School fees and levies are charged on an annual basis with the Fee Statement issued in February of Term 1 in accordance with the School Fees and Levies Schedule (available on our website).
3. Fees are due to be paid within 21 days of the issue of the Statement of Fees and Levies unless item 4 applies e.g. a Payment Plan for regular instalments is in place. The due date will be noted in the statement.
4. 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 date shown in the School Fees Information Pack issued each 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 St Joseph's 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 or on the Parent Portal.
 - (iv) All matters are dealt with on a confidential basis.

5. Recovery of unpaid fees

In fairness to families who pay their school fees regularly and on time, our 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 school 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 the date shown in the School Fees Information Pack issued each year or as negotiated with the Principal and/ or Finance Secretary. To establish an Agreed Payment Plan, forms are available on the school website, Parent Portal or from the school finance office.

Late Start Enrolment

New students entering St Joseph's 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

Notification of withdrawal must be notified in writing by completing a Withdrawal of Enrolment Form. 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 textbooks, library books and iPads 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 school finance office.

School Fees Structure

We will always seek to balance affordability with the cost of providing quality education as expected by parents, the Parish, and the wider community. Fees and levies are subject to an annual review by the School Board to ensure that they are kept to the minimum level possible. Please note that fees are subject to change at any time; where possible, notification of any change will be communicated to parents/guardians in advance. Each year a School Fees Information Pack is produced and issued to all families.

'School Fees' comprise of a number of fees and levies which are outlined below. Discounts are provided to siblings who attend St Joseph's Catholic Primary School at the same time. The discount is given on the base Tuition Fee only. Refer to the "School Fees & Levies" contained in the School Fees Pack for the current fees and levies.

Enrolment Application Fee

St Joseph's does not charge an Enrolment Application Fee.

Confirmation of Enrolment Fee

A non-refundable Confirmation of Enrolment Fee is required on completion and lodgment of the Confirmation of Enrolment Form.

Tuition Fees, Family & Student Levies

Tuition fees and levies are generally referred to as "School fees". School fees will vary depending on circumstances. Discounts are offered depending on the number of children attending the school at the same time. School fees include the cost of tuition and resources including classroom stationery, photocopying, art and craft items, science materials, general class resources, general technology, as well as, covering the cost of swimming, sport, incursions and excursions.

School fees do **not** include:

The purchase of back-to-school booklists, uniforms, personal stationery, optional programs e.g., band, instrumental music, hire of musical instruments, school photos, extra-curricular activities, specialist fees, one to one iPad program. Camp expenses are also **not** included in school fees and are notified separately.

School Building/ Capital Levy

This levy is charged per family. The levy enables us to pay our school building loans, for building maintenance, as well as plan for future facility improvements. **The Capital Levy is a mandatory payment.**

Parents & Friends (P&F) Levy

The school collects a levy per family on behalf of the P&F Association. The P&F Assoc. plays a vital role in developing and fostering community. Rather than conducting constant fundraising activities, the P&F conducts major fundraising events e.g., the school Fete. The proceeds from the Fete and any other activities are used to support the school in achieving its annual goals. Included in the levy is an annual fee payable to the Parents & Friends Federation of Queensland.

Additional Costs

- **Camps**

Camp expenses are not included in school fees and are invoiced separately. The following camps are conducted annually:

- ⇒ Year 4 camp
- ⇒ Year 5 camp
- ⇒ Year 6 camp

All students are expected to attend camps.

- **Prep Resource Levy**

This levy is in lieu of a booklist. The levy is charged per student.

- **One to One Program Levy**

This levy is charged for the provision of a laptop or iPad for students in Year 3, 4, Year 5 and Year 6. The levy is charged per student. Use of personal laptops or iPad at school is not permitted.

- **Band Levy**

Students from Year 3 can choose to join the School Band. A specialist Band Teacher is employed by the school to teach students. School has a limited number of instruments available for hire. Students may use their own instrument, but it must be approved by the Band Teacher. The Band levy and any instrument hire costs are charged per student. When joining the Band students are required to commit for at least one term and as such the levy for students leaving the Band prior to the end of the term will be charged for the whole term.

- **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Several extra-curricular activities are offered by third parties through the school for example:

- Piano lessons
- Highland dancing
- Tennis lessons
- Guitar lessons
- Singing lessons
- AFL
- Instrumental music lessons – violin & cello. Some instruments are available for hire from school, the cost of which is added to your school fees.

Payment for extra-curricular activities is made directly to third party provider e.g., the cost for piano lessons is paid directly to the piano teacher.

Payment of School Fees

Enrolment and acceptance of students at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School carries with it an obligation by parents/guardians to pay all school fees. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) accepting the enrolment of their child/children at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School to meet their commitment to the school fees.

The school relies on the prompt payment of fees & levies in order to meet our commitments and to manage our cash flow. To enable this to be done effectively all families have a responsibility to pay their fees in a timely manner, failure to do so will result in a review of the enrolment. A School Fees Information Pack will be issued to all families at commencement of Term 1 – the pack will contain a Direct Debit Request form. All families are asked to complete the Direct Debit form and return it to the school Office early in Term 1. Payment frequency options for Direct Debit payments are:

- 40 weekly payments
- 20 fortnightly payments
- 10 equal monthly payments
- 4 quarterly payments
- 1 annual payment in advance

If these options are not suitable parents/guardians should contact the Finance Secretary to arrange an alternative Payment Plan. To assist you in calculating weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, or annual payments there is a ***Fees and Frequency Calculator*** on the St Joseph's Parent Portal.

School fees are invoiced annually in February. Statements are emailed to families usually by the fourth week of the term. Where an email address is not held statements may, where necessary, be mailed. It is important that the School Office is notified of any change of email or postal address. Parents and guardians are responsible for keeping the school informed of their current email and postal address.

Financial Responsibility

On enrolment parents/guardians accept financial responsibility for fees which is used to set up their school fee account. There are three options as to how financial responsibility can be set up:

1. Joint and several financial responsibility- this option should be selected when a student has been enrolled by two parents/guardians.
2. Sole financial responsibility – selected by single parents/guardians.
3. Split financial responsibility – can be selected when families are split, and two separate accounts are required.

In most instances option 1 joint & several financial responsibility applies - any other option selected must be approved by the school. Also, please note that the same financial responsibility must apply to siblings attending the school.

An explanation of the options.

Joint and Several responsibility allows either party to make enquiries on the account and holds both parties financially responsible either jointly or individually.

Sole financial responsibility effectively means that one person has financial responsibility for the account. Other related persons are not entitled to make enquiries concerning the state of the account. ***This section would normally be completed where there is a single parent.***

Split financial responsibility would normally only be applied where families have separated, and the school agrees to accept that each parent will only be responsible for a percentage of the debt. Under this arrangement – the same conditions of sole financial responsibility will apply to each parent. i.e., financial details can only be provided to a person regarding their portion of the debt.

Changes to financial responsibility must be requested by completing a Change in Financial Obligation Form and a Termination of Financial Obligation Form which the school will review and advise whether the change has been approved.

Refunds

Refunds are not given for non-attendance of school events e.g., excursions, swimming. Refunds on prepaid events such as camps are not automatic. Refunds will be considered for sickness or injury on a case-by-case basis and will be dependent on whether the school is able to recoup the costs from suppliers.