



POLICY AND GUIDELINES
School Fees Policy
Developed 2014

Our Lady's Primary School Wangaratta

IDENTITY STATEMENT

Embracing a compassionate and dynamic community, through strong Gospel Values, quality education and promoting respect for all.

Preamble:

This policy sets out the principles and procedures that the school board of Our Lady's Primary school uses to advise the Parish Priest of the Wangaratta parishes when dealing with matters that relate to school fees.

Our Lady's Primary School supports a community that has been identified with a large number of families that are financially challenged. It is our mission to provide support for these families whilst at the same time providing an educational experience that develops all students at the level that the community expects.

Commonwealth and State government grants provide about 80% of the financial support for the school with locally generated funds helping to supplement the difference between the grants and total running costs. Collection of school fees and levies is an important component of the local funding. All measures should be taken to sensitively collect sufficient school fees to ensure the smooth running of the school.

Relevant Policies:

This policy supports the guidelines and principles articulated in the Diocese of Sandhurst School Education Board (SSEB) Guidelines 2001.

Relevant Vision Statement:

We firmly believe that Our Lady's is a school in which:-

- ◆The values of the Gospel of Jesus Christ touch the personal life of the child, where he/she is able to experience people who manifest qualities of love, forgiveness, patience, compassion, tolerance and justice.
- ◆A strong community is fostered where respect for ourselves, others, environment, heritage and Church is created and nurtured.
- ◆Each individual is given the opportunity to develop to their full potential through quality teaching and learning experiences.

BELIEFS AND COMMITMENTS

In attempting to realise the above rationale and vision Our Lady's Primary School upholds the following beliefs and commitments.

- All families are expected to contribute financially in some way to the running of Our Lady's Primary School. The level to which some families contribute will be dependent on their financial circumstances.
- Processes need to be in place so that those who can pay can do so easily and efficiently and that those families who find payment difficult are able to communicate their need for support.
- All families interested in a Catholic education should have access to our school regardless of their ability to pay.
- School fees are set annually through a careful process that requires a balanced approach to match the funding needs of Our Lady's Primary School with the ability of families to pay. This process in itself involves input from many sources followed by discernment by those charged with the responsibility to review and approve annual school fees. Through that process, there is ample opportunity to consider the issues of affordability for our families and the funding needs of our schools.
- The challenge of having to maximize fee collection, yet at the same time to provide consideration for those families that are unable to pay school fees in full, or in part, requires the application of sound judgment and compassionate handling of individual circumstances.
- Families that choose a Catholic education for their child need to acknowledge they have an obligation to financially support their children through payment of fees and this commitment should be sought, in writing, at each new enrolment.
- It is almost impossible to provide prescriptive guidelines to cover all possible situations or scenarios that may be encountered in the process of setting and collecting fees. Common sense, thoughtful judgment and discretion will be needed in unusual or challenging circumstances. This discretion will be exercised by the parish priest and the principal.

DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy School Fees shall be considered to be tuition fees, levies and other charges.

Current Fee / Levy categories

Family Fee

Charged per family and is used contribute to the general running costs of the school

Family Technology Levy

Charged per family and is used to off set costs in supporting technology in the school.

Tuition Levy

Charged per student and is used to fund classroom materials and resources.

Capital Levy

Charged per student and is used to service loans or to support capital projects.

Swimming Levy

Charged per student and is used to pay for swimming programs

Leadership Centre, Bridging Centre Camp, Discovery Centre Excursion Levy

Charged per student and is used to pay for camps and excursions. This levy can vary from year to year depending on the program.

Leadership Centre Ipad Levy

Charged per student and used to offset to cost of the Ipad program.

Performing Arts Levy:

Charged per student to cover cost of performing arts excursion/ incursion

Guidelines for Setting School Fees:

School fees will be set each year through the following general process:

- School fees are to be set in the year before the year they are applicable in.
- Information from the Catholic Education Office is provided each year to help schools determine their likely funding for the next year from Government Grants according to the established recurrent formula.
- Consideration for general cost increases for education needs to be taken into account this is usually done using the Commonwealth Educational Consumer Price Index increases. Any fee adjustment would be at the level of the current Educational CPI as a starting point.
- Through the process of drafting the budget for the coming year, the principal and admin officer will determine the total approximate funding needs after taking into account their operational and capital funding requirements and the need to service debt obligations. The adjusted school fee for the following year will be presented to the school board typically at the November meeting.
- Funding from other sources such as parish contributions, fund raising activities, investment or rental income and alternative income sources should be included in deliberations.
- Past experience, with respect to overall fee collection rates for the current year, will provide a good guide to fee affordability in a general sense.

Disclosure of Fees and Levies to the School Community

- After the annual review of school fees and levies has been completed, the school community will be advised of the fee applicable for the following year. as soon as possible before the end of the year.

Guidelines for payment of school fees:

Fee Payment and schedules

- Arrangements for methods and time periods for payment are typically advised to families before to the end of year before the year in which the fees apply.
- Families are asked to indicate their support for fee payment and to confirm the amount, method and time table for fee payment via written agreement.
- Families are encouraged to make use of direct debt arrangements
- Families receiving welfare payments are asked to use the centrepay program.

Families arriving during the year

- Families arriving part way through the school year will be charged a pro-rata fee starting from the start of the first full term they are at the school. Camp costs will be recovered if a student attends a camp prior to the first full term.

Families leaving during the year

- Families who leave during the year will be charged a pro-rata fee based for the last full term that the child was at school. Camp costs will be recovered if a camp falls in the period between the last full term and the date of leaving.

Guidelines for school fee alleviation:

- It is the practice of Our Lady's Primary to support all families who seek a place at our school regardless of their capacity to pay.
- The principal and the parish priest have the authority to grant fee and levy concessions to families.
- All efforts will be made to come to an arrangement that best suits both the school and the family.
- It is preferred that concessions be arranged prior to, or at, the beginning of each school year.
- Holders of health care cards are encouraged to make applications for Education Maintenance Allowance which can be deducted from their fees or in some cases the remaining fees can be negotiated. Typically a family being provided fee support will be asked to sign over their EMA payment to be receipted against the tuition levy.
- Families will be asked, where practical, to direct debt or use centrepay for any payments.

Communication:

- A clear expectation for support of fee payment is set out on all enrolment forms and a commitment to following these exceptions is a condition of enrolment. Provision will be made on the enrolment forms for parents to sign to agree to this obligation.
- The amount to be collected for fees and levies is to be communicated to the school community prior to the end of the preceding school year.
- Families are asked to communicate, as early as possible, with the school if they are unable to make the full payment.
- Families will be issued with an invoice at the start of the year outlining total payments for each year and any arrears
- A statement is issued each term to all families who haven't paid in full.
- The school will contact families who fall behind in their commitments personally, by phone or by letter, to determine what actions need to take place.

Guidelines for using debt collection:

In cases where families have ignored all reasonable attempts to negotiate a fee repayment strategy and further action is required the services of a debt collector may be engaged.

- Action will only be taken once the family has left the school.
- Approval will be sought from the parish priest before any action is taken.
- The family involved will be notified that the services of a debt collection agency have been engaged.

Evaluation.

This policy will be reviewed by the school board as part of the policy review cycle or in response to SSEB or government changes with enrolment.

Attachment 1 Fee Notice

28th November 2013

Dear

RE: 2014 SCHOOL FEES AND LEVIES

Your 2014 Fees and Levies will be as follows:

Family Fee	\$760-00
Family Technology Fee	\$100-00
Student Tuition Levy –	\$180-00
Student Capital Levy –	\$ 30-00
Student Swimming Levy-	\$ 30-00
Performing Arts Levy –	\$ 10-00
P/1/2 Excursion Levy –	<u>\$ 10-00</u>
TOTAL	\$1120-00

Payment of your fees & levies can be made in a number of ways. Regular payments directly to the office by either cash or cheque (please note we do not have EFTPOS facilities) can be made weekly, fortnightly or monthly.

We have a Direct Debiting facility which involves 20 payments over the course of the year. This will commence on Thursday March 6th 2014 and continues Thursday fortnightly up to and including Thursday November 27th 2014. If you would like to use this facility your fortnightly payment would be \$56-00. Please contact Julie in the office to arrange the necessary paperwork.

Alternatively you can also make payments directly into the school's bank account via internet banking. Again please see Julie for the necessary information.

All school fees and levies must be paid in full by Friday November 30th 2014.

If you have any concerns or queries please do not hesitate to contact either Julie or myself.

Yours sincerely

Mark Walsh
Principal

Attachment 2- Commitment on enrolment form

ACCOUNT INFORMATION

I/We agree to accept responsibility for paying accounts:

..... (parent/s signature/s)

If accounts are to be sent to someone other than parent(s)/guardian(s) please provide details

Name.....

Address

Do you have a Health Care or Pension Card Yes / No (delete one)

Card Number

Attachment 3 Acceptance of school fees

I _____ (name)

1. Hereby accept the financial support offered by the Catholic Education Office in 2014.
2. I agree to sign over my 2014 EMA parent portion to Our Lady's Primary School to be paid off my child's/children's levies.
3. I also agree to pay the following amount(s) in full to Our Lady's Primary School :

Performing Arts Levy –	\$ 10-00
3-6 Camp Levy –	\$ 10-00
Performing Arts Levy –	\$ 10-00
3-6 Camp Levy –	\$ 80-00
Performing Arts Levy –	\$ 10-00
3-6 Camp Levy –	\$ 80-00
5/6 IPAD Levy –	<u>\$ 150-00</u>

TOTAL \$ 350-00

4. I agree to use Centrepay to pay the above amount and have completed and returned the necessary authority.

Signed _____

Date _____

Attachment 4 Letter of Agreement Direct Debiting



Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

White Street
Wangaratta
Victoria

Correspondence to:
PO Box 486
Wangaratta 3676

Phone: (03) 5721 3783 Fax: (03) 5721 9401
Email: principal@ourladys.sand.catholic.edu.au

LETTER OF AGREEMENT – DIRECT DEBITING 2014

I/We _____ (Name/s) agree to a direct debit

of \$_____ being made from my bank account (refer to Direct Debit Request), commencing on

Thursday March 6th 2014 and Thursday fortnightly thereafter up to and including

Thursday November 27th 2014 (20 payments in total).

Signed _____ / _____

Date _____