



# School Fees Policy

## 1.0 Rationale:

At Catherine McAuley College, as a Mercy School living in the Spirit of Catherine McAuley and following the model of Jesus we are dedicated to our Touchstone Statement.

'Inspiring members of our community to be learners impelled to thrive and serve'

Catherine McAuley College provides a comprehensive curriculum, experienced and dedicated staff and contemporary resources and facilities to meet the educational needs of students. To support the provision of outstanding educational Service to the community, the College, governed by Mercy Education Ltd, set an appropriate fee level. Justice to all requires that fee levels be equitable, while in the tradition of Mercy, Compassion is shown to those in need.

The school fee policy is designed to ensure that all parents accept their responsibility to support the College financially. Payment of fees enables the College to remain viable and provide a quality education to all students. The policy intent is to ensure that those who can pay do, and those who require assistance are appropriately supported.

## 2.0 Definitions:

**School fees** - the amounts charged by the College to families to contribute to the education of their children. They include tuition charges and levies.

**Enrolment Fees** - fees payable by parents on application for enrolment and acceptance of an enrolment

**Application for Enrolment** – in the form prescribed in the Enrolment policy.

**Payment Arrangement Plan** – direct debit arrangement with the College.

**Parents/Guardians:** Includes the natural biological parents, carers or legal guardian of a student.

## 3.0 Policy Statement:

### Catherine McAuley College School Fees:

- All parents/guardians are required to actively support the school financially by the payment of annual school fees to ensure the financial viability of Catherine McAuley College, and that parents carry costs equitably for both current and future years.
- Setting of fees is the responsibility of Catherine McAuley College and reflects the required level of finance to maintain excellence in education as well as the socio-economic status of the school community. Fee levels reflect responsible financial management informed by the values of justice, fairness and compassion.
- An Enrolment Deposit is required upon application of enrolment which is non-refundable.

- The College fees will be reviewed and set each year. Annual fee increases are set with consideration of relevant factors including CPI, changes in teacher salaries and increases in the National Education Index. This review is conducted by the Finance Committee and approved by the College Advisory Council and Board of Mercy Education to ensure any fee increases are kept to a minimum.
- Parents will be advised no later than November of fees for the following year.
- Fees cover all compulsory costs for the year including payments for Years 7, 8 and 10 camps, excursions for all year levels and Years 10, 11 and 12 reflection days and retreats. Families of students in Year 9 are required to contribute to the cost of their child's Outdoor Education Experience.
- Whilst the cost of fees includes camps and excursions, refunds do not apply for non-attendance at any of the aforementioned activities.
- The Year 9 Outdoor Education Experience is an additional cost. In the event of extreme circumstances at the Principals discretion it may be refunded.
- The cost of optional tours/ trips are not included, for example; Immersion experiences etc. Non-refundable deposits apply to some of these activities.
- There may be additional fees to some student's accounts who enroll in Outdoor Education and VCE Outdoor and Environmental Studies and in VCAL and VET subjects that attract additional costs.
- If a child/family are exiting the college throughout the year, one terms notice must be given in writing, and payment of fees covering the one term notice period is required (i.e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the full year school fee must be paid in addition to the pro rata year to date fees up to and including the last day of enrolment at the College).
- Consistent with the shared mission of the Catholic Church and the Sisters of Mercy, fee concessions may be granted by the Principal for families experiencing financial hardship. Consideration will be viewed according to need but there is an expectation that a minimum contribution will be made by all.

#### **Fee Billing**

- Fee structures and billing procedures are kept as simple and streamlined as possible.
- Enrolment information from the enrolment form will determine the fee payer(s).
- Accounts for fees are issued and payable as per elected payment method on the Financial Commitment form.

#### **Payment Options**

- Catherine McAuley College provides a range of payment options for parents to pay fees. These alternatives include the option to pay weekly, fortnightly, monthly, per term or an annual basis and are to be paid in advance.
- Direct Debit is the required method of payment. Any other payment arrangement must be made in writing and discussed with the Finance Department.

#### **Special Circumstances**

- Special consideration will be given to the difficulties faced by families trying to provide Catholic education for multiple children. A family discount will be provided where 3 or more children from the same family are attending the College.

- In accordance with the Catholic Church's preferential option for the poor, no baptised Catholic is to be excluded from enrolment on grounds of incapacity to pay.
- Financial assistance through fee concession will be provided to families in need and those experiencing difficult circumstances. In this instance, a request can be made in writing to the Business Manager and or Principal with completed supporting documentation supplied by the Finance Office. This is required to support this request. Policies and practices for such assistance is available on the College website, communicated appropriately to all families.
- Requests for fee relief shall be treated in a spirit of justice, dignity, compassion and confidentiality. Ultimately the Principal of the College approves any recommendation for concession and fee relief.

### **Part-time enrolments**

The following students may be eligible for fee reductions based on reduced enrolment.

- **Dual enrolled students** – normally students with a disability who spend some days at CMC and some days with schools such as a Special Development School.
  - **Year 13 students** – students who undertake Year 12 over two years
  - **Students undertaking School Based Apprenticeships** – this may not be all students undertaking SBA's, but does relate to students who undertake their SBA during two full school days, meaning that they attend school on 3 full days per week.
- Dual enrolment reductions** - are usually based on the student's time-fraction within each school. E.g 0.6 CMC and 0.4 special development school, students would pay 0.6 of CMC yearly fee.

**Year 13 students** – 20% reduction for each year

**School Based Apprenticeships** – 20% reduction for each year. (Note: Parents should not be gaining other fee reductions due to number of students at the school).

### **4.0 Duty of Care**

Catherine McAuley College is a Child Safe School. We owe all students a duty of care to take reasonable measures to protect them from risks of injury that should have been reasonably foreseen. All on and off-site activities require appropriate supervision and greater measures may need to be taken for younger students or students with disabilities to meet this duty of care. The College's risk assessment procedures and emergency management plan provide the processes for ensuring the above is achieved.

### **5.0 Minimum Standards**

The College monitors its compliance with the minimum standards in line with Ministerial Order 870 in an ongoing manner.

### **6.0 Legislation:**

*This Policy is mandated by:*

- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd

- Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 –  
[http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol\\_act/dda1992264/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/dda1992264/)
- Code of Canon Law, Canons 96, 217 and 797 -  
[http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/\\_P2N.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_P2N.HTM)
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
- Mercy Education
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007
- Education and Training Reform Amendment 2010
- Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013
- Australian Education Act 2013
- Australian Education Regulation 2013

## **7.0 Related Policies, Procedures and Forms:**

- Procedure 8.01B: Setting School Fees at Mercy Colleges Mercy Education Policy 8.01A
- Mercy Policy 8.02A: Collection of Outstanding Fees at Mercy Colleges
- Mercy Procedure 8.02B: Collection of Outstanding Fees at Mercy Colleges
- Enrolment Policy
- School Fee Collection Policy
- School Fee Collection Procedure