



# SCHOOL FEES POLICY

## Rationale

Fees for education in a Catholic school are an inbuilt component of the total funding of Catholic Education. A proportion of the funding for Catholic schools comes from the Commonwealth and State Governments. The remaining proportion of the funding is raised through private financial contribution to supplement the Government's contribution and is principally met by the charging of school fees.

## Scriptural Context

*"My children, our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love which shows itself in action."*

*1 John 3:18*

*"I come that you may have life and have it to the full."*

*John 10:10*

## Aims

It is the responsibility of St. Patrick's School Board to set and charge fees in order to meet the financial needs of the school. The School Fees Policy ensures that all Catholic families have access to a Catholic Education.

## Guidelines

When setting fee levels, the Principal, Parish priest and St Patrick's School Board will take into account the policies of the Catholic Education Commission of NSW and of the Lismore Catholic Education Office.

They will take into account the financial needs of the school and the ability of the community serviced by the school to meet the level of fees to be charged, keeping in mind the socio-economic level of the community.

## *Fees and Levies*

### School Fee

St Patrick's School charges a school fee for tuition purposes. The first child attending the school pays the full fee. Each consecutive child attending school at the same time will have further discounts applied. The maximum fee is charged for four or more children enrolled in the school.

A resource fee is included in the school fee:-

- All classroom materials children will use during the course of the year
- Art supplies & sports equipment
- maintenance of our school library book stock.
- computer software and associated licenses

### Maintenance Levy

All families pay a Maintenance Levy. This is one charge per family and is included in the overall fee structure. The Maintenance Levy is set aside for small maintenance items that

occur as natural wear and tear of the school facilities.

### **Parish Building Levy**

All families pay a Parish Building Levy. This is one charge per family and is included in the overall fee structure. The Parish Building Levy is collected each term by the Parish and is deposited into a Building Fund account. Funds collected by the Parish are used to refurbish a loan.

### ***Fee Remissions***

St Patrick's School may initiate offers for remission fees to families in situations where financial pressures are known to exist. This will be decided on an individual basis by recommendation to the Parish Priest from the Principal.

### ***Fee Collection***

St Patrick's School renders fee accounts to parents once a term throughout the school year. A letter *see Attachments* (and personal contact by the Principal if necessary) will follow up fees not paid as due promptly. For families with fees long overdue for payment, the Parish Priest and Principal may employ the services of a debt collector and/or Solicitor to assist in recovering monies due, when clearly the parent/caregiver is able to meet the payment but is unwilling to do so. It is hoped that the institution of court proceedings to recover unpaid debts, would be extremely rare.

### **Guideline Indicators**

**Confidentiality-** Consideration of application for fee relief should be restricted to the Parish Priest, Principal and Administration staff.

### ***Fee Collections:***

- School fees for the following year will be set at the final School Board meeting after estimating income and expenditure on projected enrolments for the next year. The collection rate and a surplus to allow for the unexpected need to be taken into account when considering the fee. Fees set will be reflected in the new budget and will take into account rising costs and the ability of families to pay accordingly. The School Board will then recommend the fee structure and budget be presented to the Parish Finance Council for approval.
- In the first term of the new year, St Patrick's School will provide parents with the full details of fees and charges for that year.
- Payments will be accepted in full up front at the start of the year, or on a quarterly, fortnightly or weekly basis. Accounts sent out each term are to be paid by the due date, unless an alternative arrangement has been made with the Principal.
- Parents are able to pay by cash, cheque, eftpos or direct credit into the bank account.
- Fee statements are issued at the commencement of each school term.
- Receipts will be emailed to parents/caregivers.
- Send "Reminder Statement" six weeks into term with 1 week to pay.
  
- Send letter 1 or 2 requesting payment seven weeks into term. (see attachment)
- Send letter 3 requesting payment eight weeks into term.(see attachment)
- Send letter 4 requesting payment nine weeks into term. (see attachment)
- Telephone or personal contact ten weeks into term.

The balance is in securing a reasonable justice to all parents by seeking to ensure that individual parents contribute their share. This must be placed in context of the Church's mission to care for and educate the student. The damage might be done to the Church's image by the refusal of access of a possible expulsion of a student is a further consideration. Further, it is likely that harm will be done to the relationship between parents and the Church if parishes pursue the matter of fee recovery in these public ways and this is to be avoided.

- a) If accounts have fallen in arrears any given term, and no contact has been made with the Principal or the Parish Priest, the Principal is to telephone the family / families concerned, to make an appointment to meet with the Principal.
- b) With the approval of the Parish Priest, fees overdue for payment by more than one year may be placed with a debt collection agency or solicitor in an effort to have the overdue account finalised.

### **Reflective Materials**

- Handbook for Parish Schools 2008, Catholic Education Office, Lismore
- Enrolment Policy 2015, St. Patrick's School
- Parent Information Book 2015, St. Patrick's School

This policy was last ratified by St. Patrick's School Board in...  
Reviewed in ...

**2005**  
**Sept 2010, Nov 2015**

*Attachments*

Fee Letter One

*Insert Date*

*Insert Name*

*Insert Address*

Dear *Insert Name*,

According to our records we note that you owe \$*Insert Amount* in outstanding fees for your child.

It is imperative that all fees be paid to ensure the ongoing enrolment of your children at St. Patrick's School.

Please attend to this as soon as possible.

Thank you for making some contribution towards this account. I trust that this arrangement will continue.

Yours faithfully,

Principal



**Fee Letter Two**

*Insert Date*

*Insert Name*  
*Insert Address*

Dear *Insert Name*,

According to our records we note that you owe \$*Insert Amount* in outstanding fees for your child.

It is imperative that all fees be paid to ensure the ongoing enrolment of your children at St. Patrick's School.

Please attend to this as soon as possible. If you are experiencing difficulties, please make an appointment to see me or call me at the school.

Yours faithfully,

Principal

### Fee Letter Three

*Insert Date*

*Insert Name*

*Insert Address*

Dear *Insert Name*,

You are reminded that the settlement of outstanding school fees *insert amount* or a written commitment to honour an agreement in relation to fees at St Patrick's Primary School is a pre-condition of enrolment at the school.

Continuing enrolment of *child's name/s* at St Patrick's Primary School cannot be guaranteed until arrangements have been made with the Principal to address the matter of the outstanding school fees.

You are required to urgently make contact with myself within the next seven days so that this matter can be resolved in relation to the ongoing enrolment of your child/children.

Yours sincerely,

Principal



## Fee Letter Four

*Insert Date*

*Insert Name*

*Insert Address*

Dear *Insert Name*,

We refer to the recent correspondence sent to you from the school regarding the payment of outstanding fees. When enrolling your child/children into St Patrick's, you made a written commitment to pay school fees. Unfortunately, you have not fulfilled this commitment.

Our schools are funded in the main part by the payment of school fees by parents. As it appears you are making little effort to meet your school fee commitment. We are left with no alternative but to advise you that should your account not be paid by *insert date( days)* or a satisfactory arrangement made for the payment of these fees your child/children *insert names* will not be guaranteed enrolment at St Patrick's School in *insert year*.

We have the best interest of your children at heart and hope that you will respond favourably to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Parish Priest

School Board Chairperson